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THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF RECRUITMENT  
IN THE UNIFICATION CHURCH

By

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B.A., Willamette University, 1970

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1978

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Taylor, David F., M.A., July 1978, Sociology

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The Social Organization of Recruitment in the  
Unification Church (162 pp.)

The purpose of this study is to provide an empirical description of recruitment into the Unification Church. The Unification Church is one of many new religious movements that has appeared in America during the 1970's. The methods Church members use to attract and secure the commitment of individuals to the Church has generated controversy in recent years.

The research was initiated under the assumption that these recruitment strategies could be understood through the use of qualitative field methods. As an ethnographic treatment of religious indoctrination, the study is based on participant observation of the recruitment process and is grounded in the interaction and language usage of participants. Close attention is given to the daily life of Church members and prospective members, where members in a cooperative effort to persuade individuals to join their movement.

join(?)  
help

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to my parents, Jack and Mary Lou Taylor, and advisors Dr. Jon Driessen and Dr. Robert Balch. The advice, encouragement, and patience they each gave me made this thesis possible. A special thank you is in order for railroad conductors, Harry Carrick and Nez Smith, for delivering me to and from where my research was carried out. I also thank Dr. John Lofland for inspiring my self-confidence and his helpful comments on an early draft of this thesis.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

In America since the late 60s there has been a burgeoning of youth-oriented spiritual movements. This phenomenon is regarded generally as an outgrowth of the counter-culture movement--a continual exploring of non-traditional paths towards a meaningful life. Many youths have shifted away from both main line religion and traditional materialistic pursuits and have assumed alternative lifestyles that potentially offer fulfilling communal relationships and answers to existential concerns, as well as personal identity and purpose.

Among these new and quasi-religious movements is the Unification Church, a millenarian sect led by the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, a self-styled Korean evangelist. The church has been the subject of increasing controversy over the past three years. Individuals and organizations from various sectors of society have hurled severe criticism at the church. Accusations of political affiliation with South Korea, illegal sources of income, and a questionable tax-exempt status have led to Congressional investigations and court cases.



The most prominent accusation is the charge that the church uses brainwashing to recruit people into its movement. A legion of traditional church leaders, parents, and some media personnel have described how the church attracts young people to isolated indoctrination centers and applies "mind control" techniques. Critics claim that prospective recruits experience overwhelming physical and psychological pressures: Over a period of days and weeks their world views supposedly change radically, and those individuals who are successfully "brainwashed" leave the center as zealous devotees of the church.

This thesis is an ethnographic study of church members' recruitment practices and is based on first-hand observations of the entire process of indoctrination into the church. The study leaves to the legal profession, psychiatrists, and other scholars the question of whether or not the church uses psychologically coercive techniques to recruit members. My objective is to provide an empirical account of the methods the church utilizes in its recruitment process.

Hans Toch viewed the assimilation of individuals into social movements, both religious and secular, as a

transaction between susceptibility and appeal.<sup>1</sup> Most studies of recruitment focus on the susceptibilities and motives that predispose people to join a particular movement. They examine how people seek out belief systems, ideologies, and other forms of appeal that satisfy their respective predispositions. Such studies develop explanations and theories of religious recruitment by matching personal traits of converts with characteristics of the movement they join. Prior research has not thoroughly considered social movements' organized practices of attracting people to their ranks.<sup>2</sup> Individuals are not drawn towards organizations merely because their susceptibilities are exploited or their needs are fulfilled by ideals and ideologies. Of course, a viable world view is essential to draw adherents, but the "truth" must be communicated to be believed, and movements do use human intermediaries to convey their various appeals. They must make an intentional effort to contact potential

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<sup>1</sup>Hans Toch, The Social Psychology of Social Movements (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>Published monographs on recruitment and conversion are rare. Among the more recent: Leon Fesiinger, Henry W. Ricken, and Stanley Schachter, When Prophecy Fails (New York: Harper, 1955); J. Stillson Judah, Hare Krishna and the Counter Culture (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1974); John Lofland, Doomsday Cult (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966); B. D. Zablocki, The Joyful Community (Baltimore: Penguin, 1971).

members, reveal their respective beliefs, ideology, etc., and secure and maintain converts' commitments.

Recruitment is a process that is socially organized and accomplished. During my early contact with church members, I concluded that a comprehensive examination of recruitment into the Unification Church is possible by applying qualitative field methods. After making preliminary observations, it was apparent that people entered the movement through a routine procedure. Recruitment methods were sophisticated and carefully applied to persuade individuals to join. Church members consciously mobilized themselves to achieve as many conversions as possible, e.g., they would accept anyone as a prospective member who was not obviously violent or mentally deficient.

Qualitative field work has been described by Irving Goffman as ". . . the empathetic subjugation of one's body."<sup>3</sup> This phrase describes appropriately how the research was conducted. I observed the recruitment process from the vantage point of a direct participant. I took part in all aspects of church members' daily lives, thus directly experiencing each phase of indoctrination into the church. My observations of this process

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<sup>3</sup> A comment made at a Symposium on Qualitative Field Method, Annual Meeting of the Pacific Sociological Association, San Jose, California, 1974.

began as a chance encounter with a young lady in downtown Los Angeles in February 1975. She asked me if I would like to hear a lecture on world peace and accompanied me to a Church center where I met her fellow members, most of whom were European, particularly German. At first I was puzzled as to why a group of young aliens was proselytizing in a large American city. After noticing that the church walls were dominated by glossy portraits of Reverend Moon, I recalled that in the prior year he made a public appearance in the city in which I was living.

The Europeans were part of the Moon entourage that accompanied him on that recent "Day of Hope" speaking tour. Many of Reverend Moon's followers from other countries served as promoters and emissaries of good will during his tour of twenty-one American cities in 1973 and thirty-two more cities in 1974. The people I met remained in the United States to help the church in its proselytizing and fund-raising efforts.

The members, who were gregarious, shook my hand and asked me numerous questions. Where was I from? What did I do? Did I believe in God? Was I a Christian? The lecture presentation was equally bold and direct. According to the lecturer, history has reached a culmination point. In our age, God will fulfill his centuries-long effort to establish "His Kingdom on Earth." The speaker cited historical signs and revelations as evidence

that God has sent a new Messiah, the "Lord of the Second Advent," to redeem mankind. The lecturer said in conclusion that this second Messiah was now living and would bring his truth to the entire world. The speaker stopped short of asserting that Reverend Moon or anyone else was the Messiah, but he said that members of the church were "pioneers" in the restoration of the Heavenly Kingdom on Earth through the Lord of the Second Advent. He invited everyone to attend a three-day workshop to study the Divine Principles, revelations Reverend Moon received from God.

The workshop was held at a former YMCA camp in the mountains southeast of Los Angeles. While attending the workshop, I was amazed by members' exuberance and certitude toward their millennial vision. I decided to proceed with the research by gathering their accounts of how they met the Family, as they called themselves, and became committed subsequently to the movement. I explained to the director of the Los Angeles center my academic and personal interest, and when I asked if I could interview him and other church members he said sternly that he doubted if it would be possible. He implied that my sociological interest was rather trivial compared to the magnitude of church goals. "This is the work of the Messiah," he said. He did encourage me to come to another workshop; perhaps then I would lose interest in

writing about the church and become a "pioneer" instead. At that point it was evident that if I expected to continue the research I should become a complete participant observer.

After attending a second workshop, I decided to shift my inquiry to Berkeley, California, because Church members in Los Angeles had told me that the Church was founded originally in the Bay Area, which had the largest contingent in the United States outside of the main training center in Barrytown, New York. In Berkeley, as well as in other parts of the country, intensive recruitment campaigns on college campuses produce the largest number of converts. The church has probably recruited more people in Berkeley than in any other locale, according to church members. Once again I entered the church's social milieu as a potential prospect. In March of the same year I was approached by a church member on the Berkeley campus and was invited for dinner at the church center a few blocks away.

Between May and August of 1975, I spent fifteen to twenty evenings at centers in Berkeley, Oakland, and San Francisco. Each night church members culminated daily witnessing and fund raising by serving dinner to guests. After dinner they provided entertainment and a lecture, then asked people to spend a weekend at the Ideal City Ranch, near Boonville, which is situated one

hundred miles north of the Bay Area. For four years it was the indoctrination center for prospective members brought from the entire Bay Area, including San Jose.<sup>4</sup> I made six visits to Ideal City Ranch with stays ranging from two to nine days. Also, I frequently observed members proselytizing at various Bay Area locales: the University of California campus, street corners, bus stops, public transportation, and other places where members found access to potential recruits.

The unique feature of the Bay Area church is that it does not claim affiliation with the Unification Church. It represents itself as the Creative Community Project, even though it is an integral part of the Unification Church, and is subject to the same direction, authority, and control as other church contingents in this country.<sup>5</sup> Reverend Moon's role as the new Messiah and leader of the movement is revealed to recruits only after they are completely socialized into the church as committed converts.

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<sup>4</sup>In response to increasing public pressure, public officials forced the church to discontinue its training sessions at Ideal City. The church was told it had a faulty sewage system that could not adequately service the large number of people the ranch usually accommodated.

<sup>5</sup>Operation as a front organization in the Bay Area is probably essential and has definite advantages that will be discussed in later chapters.

On the basis of an evening at the church center individuals were accepting an invitation to spend a weekend at the Ranch. A large portion of those who attended remained beyond the weekend for a "week-long training session" and stayed for three more weeks before returning to the Bay Area as full-fledged members of the Family. They made rapid transitions from job-holders, students, drifters, and other faces in the crowd to completely committed members of the movement. One month after they were approached in public by a relative stranger, some of these people were returning to the same locations to work as front persons for the church by selling flowers, soliciting contributions, and witnessing to prospective members.

My objective was to absorb as much as possible and make note of all significant aspects of this phenomenon. Any conversation, group discussion, lecture, or other interaction between members and prospective recruits that would help explain how the church accomplished recruitment was assimilated as potentially useful data. The research was initiated without a specific conceptual framework or preliminary hypothesis. All conceptual features and categories in this study are thus grounded in direct observation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Barney G. Glaser and Anselm Strauss, Discovery of Grounded Theory (Chicago: Aldine, 1967).



Recruitment into the Unification Church is a very intense affair. If a particular observer in such a milieu is to successfully penetrate and comprehend the basic features of recruitment, he must embody both personal detachment and flexibility. The fieldworker must be able to handle numerous overtures and pressures, such as continual platonic affection which he is expected to reciprocate. He must also be able to easily assimilate novel stimuli for an extended period of time.

Since the participant observer is required to take part in a ceaseless array of activity, he is faced with the dual responsibility of assuming the role of a potential recruit and simultaneously collecting data. This situation can promote a host of anxieties. The fieldworker should have a careful and deliberate strategy for watching that is equal in tenacity to his host's efforts to convert him.

There are inherent disadvantages to hidden observation, which is why in sociological studies, it is utilized as a last resort when no other approach is available. When the fieldworker is a full participant, his observations are limited to specific times and locations. In my study, I had the choice of when to enter the indoctrination setting; but once involved, I could not casually excuse myself to view other scenes or events. With this loss of mobility, the range of observable activity was limited to the particular setting in which I was expected

to take part. Fortunately, participants in recruitment often gathered together for specific events where observation of other activities was possible. My inquiry was further restricted because I could only ask questions that were appropriate to my role as a potential member. Asking prying or controversial questions would have jeopardized my status as a participant. I also was not able to take in "behind the scenes" discussions and strategy sessions of Church leaders, but these would have been off-limits to known observers as well.

There were also advantages to doing field work as a complete participant. Direct contact with both Church members and prospective members provided me with rich material on their roles and involvements,<sup>7</sup> and I experienced and gathered data on the recruitment process without altering its natural course. Since I was

Seen?  
2. (precluded) as one of many potential members, rather than a social scientist, individuals did not feel they were being scrutinized by an outsider nor become self-conscious about their actions.

The following chapter provides an overview of the history, structure, beliefs, and life of Reverend Moon, as well as the current controversies involving Moon and

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<sup>7</sup> Leonard Schatzman and Anselm L. Strauss, Field Research (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973).

his church in recent years. The third chapter is a descriptive ethnography of the entire recruitment cycle. It traces the path of this process beginning with church members' first encounters with prospective recruits, then follows their interaction through an evening at the church center, and chronologically describes the scenes and events of a weekend of indoctrination at Ideal City. It is a detailed account, free of analytical interpretation, of how the recruitment process is experienced by prospective members. Chapter IV analyzes the social organization of recruitment and explains how Church members manage communicative relationships between themselves and recruits, establish emotional ties, and present their world view and goals. The final chapter summarizes the major features of the study and presents, in proposition form, the principles that members of the Church use to organize their recruitment.

Chapters III, IV, and V extensively quote dialogue between members and prospective recruits. Unless otherwise specified by footnote, all such conversation, songs, announcements, and speeches were made in my immediate presence and entered in field notes made while observing various stages of the recruitment process.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORY, BELIEFS, AND STRUCTURE

### OF THE UNIFICATION CHURCH

#### History and Beliefs

Sun Myung Moon was born in 1918 in North Pyongan Province in what is now North Korea. From a humble beginning, he became leader of a millennial movement that claims two million members in more than 120 countries. Moon's destiny as a self-proclaimed messiah was recognized when he was sixteen years old. According to church chronicles:

On Easter morning of 1936, Jesus appeared to him to talk about his future life. Jesus explained God's desire to establish His Kingdom on Earth and presented the need for someone on earth to take up this mission. He asked Reverend Moon to assume the responsibility. Recognizing the seriousness of accepting such a request, Reverend Moon struggled with the decision. Ultimately, however, he did accept and the course of his life began to take shape.

Over the next nine years, he received the revelation which is now presented in the Divine Principle. God's revelation comes only in response to man's questioning. Therefore, these years were essentially a time of deep and arduous search. The revelation was received progressively through prayer, study of all religious scriptures, meditation, spiritual communication with such persons as Jesus, Moses and Buddha, and direct communication with God. At the end of this time, Reverend Moon had been led

by God to solve a cast spiritual puzzle, and was<sup>1</sup> now ready to bring this revelation to the world.

Moon's "vast spiritual puzzle" was solved when he correctly identified the actual original sin that caused the Fall of Man. In the presence of God, His angels, and Christ, Moon proved his worthiness by insisting that Eve committed the original sin when she was seduced by Satan. God's original plan for mankind was for Adam and Eve to marry and have perfect, sinless children who would multiply and live forever in a Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

Armed with God's revelations and sure of his messianic status, Moon began his public ministry in 1946 in Pyongyang, Korea. His charisma attracted many followers to his unique blend of anti-communism and millennial fundamentalism. Supposedly, his success led jealous rival churches to fabricate charges against him. Moon was arrested, tortured, and left for dead by Communist forces. He was found and nursed to health by members of his congregation. His ministry continued to prosper, but he was soon rearrested and sent to prison camp just prior to the outbreak of the Korean War. The church has chronicled his legendary bravery and stamina, despite immense pain and suffering, at the prison camp. He surpassed work quotas, shared meager

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<sup>1</sup>Sun Myung Moon, Unification Church of America (New York: By the Author, 1976), p. 25.

rations with fellow prisoners, and even received a reward for his work record and "extraordinary character."<sup>2</sup>

After being liberated by American forces in 1951, Moon bicycled himself and one of his two remaining followers (helpless with a broken leg) to Pusan in Southern Korea. In Pusan, Moon resumed preaching and attracted a new congregation. In 1954, he moved to Seoul, South Korea, and formed the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity.

Moon continued to preach that the world is dominated by Satan, who is symbolized by communism, a "Godless ideology." Mankind's redemption and the restoration of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth will come to pass if a unified world family can vanquish Satan's Communist forces. According to Moon, there must be a central point around which members of the world family can unite. The logical point of unity for a world family is parents.

Originally, God intended Adam and Eve to be the true parents of mankind. Out of this model couple would emerge a single family, a national family, and, ultimately, a harmonious world family. Because of the "Fall"--Eve's submission to Satan--God's plan was altered. But parents of mankind are still needed, and the Divine Principle describes how God has worked throughout history to create

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

the true father, a perfect man, and establish through him the pattern of the true family. God sent Christ to lead mankind to redemption. God intended Christ to marry and father children, Moon states. But Christ's mission was pre-empted when His divinity was denied by John the Baptist and He was crucified by the Jews. Jesus did not come to die, asserts Moon, who has revealed to his followers that in his time God will send another perfect man as the central figure in his plan to restore the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. The new messiah will marry and extend the process of restoration to his bride, his family, other families, the nation, and finally the world. The new messiah will fulfill the uncompleted mission of Adam and Jesus.

Moon's marriage in 1960 to his present wife (he had been married at least twice before) was a turning point in his life and the life of the church. Through marriage, Moon and his wife fulfilled prophecy and became true parents of the church and, implicitly, the world community. Since then, Reverend Moon has made his messianic status known to his followers. He has referred to his wife as the "bride of Christ" and pointed out how all contemporary history is centered on him. However, Moon does not reveal his role as the second Messiah during public meetings or speaking engagements nor do his followers make such claims while in contact with the public. To make such assertions could

alienate other religious leaders and political figures who have given Reverend Moon's mission qualified support.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1960s, Reverend Moon concentrated on developing his church in Korea and Japan. This included strengthening economic foundation, and spreading his ideological alternative to Marxism. Moon's non-communist stance found favor with South Korean President Park Chung Hee. Although many Christian groups in Korea were harrassed and persecuted by the government, Moon forged a political and economic relationship with President Park. Consequently, Moon utilized the cheap labor of his devoted followers to build a business conglomerate that includes the manufacture of rifle parts for the Korean Army, pharmaceuticals, cement, heavy machinery, and ginseng tea. The current value of Moon's Korean businesses is estimated at fifteen million dollars. In addition, the church operates government-commissioned "rehabilitation centers" in South Korea for political opponents of President Park's regime. The church claims that these centers were established for the conversion of hardened political prisoners.

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<sup>3</sup>Thomas Robbins, "The Last Civil Religion: Reverend Moon and the Unification Church," Sociological Analysis 37, 2 (1976): 111.



Besides building a financial base for his church during the early 60s, Moon began missionizing in other countries, including America, Europe, and eventually Latin America. In 1959, Miss Young Don Kim arrived in San Francisco as the church's first missionary. Miss Kim concentrated her recruitment efforts in the Bay Area and Eugene, Oregon, but had little success attracting followers. Between 1959 and 1963, she recruited only twelve full-time members.

The church floundered until 1971, when Reverend Moon came to America for three months. A speaking tour of seven cities initiated his ministry in the United States. He spoke only to small audiences and received little public attention. Although few people joined the church as a result of Moon's appearances, his presence in America catalyzed growth of the movement. He gave his leaders extensive instructions and inspirational advice on how to expand church membership.

In 1972, Moon organized the One World Crusade, whose purpose was to sponsor two nationwide speaking tours. Under the banner "Day of New Hope" Moon spoke in twenty-one cities in 1973 and thirty-two more in 1974. The Crusade comprised four hundred church members--most from Japan and Europe--who traveled in teams, serving as advance people for the tour. They prepared for Moon's arrival in each city by conducting rallies, giving impromptu lectures on the Divine Principle, distributing tickets for Moon's speeches, putting up posters, and arranging for media coverage. Local dignitaries in each

city were invited to attend a lavish banquet prior to Moon's speech, which was entitled "The New Future of Christianity." The primary intent of this spiritual barnstorming was not to convert the masses or the local elite but to enhance the church's credibility and notoriety. By sharing a new interpretation of Christianity, flaunting financial success, and projecting itself as a charitable and sincere movement, the church hoped to place itself in a favorable light with the public. Moon's final tour in 1974 culminated in a speaking appearance in New York's Madison Square Garden. Moon's cadre initiated a publicity blitz that made his the most familiar face in Manhattan. His picture appeared on posters, billboards, television, and in newspapers. Church members look back on Moon's speech as "a great victory," but the majority of an overflow crowd left before he finished speaking, unimpressed and perplexed by his exhortations. Although there were no immediate mass conversions, the colossal gathering served its purpose. As one commentator recalled:

So by one grandiose publicity stroke Reverend Moon's Unification Church was catapulted from an obscure sect to one of the best known unorthodox religions in America, and the Reverend Moon himself become one of the most controversial religious figures around.<sup>4</sup>

The Day of Hope tour was a stimulus for increasing funds and membership. A retinue of his most capable foreign

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<sup>4</sup>Daniel Cohen, The New Believers: Unorthodox Religion in America (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975).

followers helped Moon expand the church in the United States. They were stationed in large American cities, and throughout 1974 and 1975 they diligently combed city streets and college campuses recruiting members and raising money by selling flowers, peanuts, and candy.

By 1975 the church labeled itself as an international movement. It claimed a worldwide membership of two million and a U.S. membership of ten to thirty thousand. Literature distributed by the church cited a quote from the Washington Star noting the movement as "probably the fastest growing faith in the world." The actual number of church members in the United States is considerably less than ten thousand; a more reasonable estimate is between two and three thousand.<sup>5</sup> The vast majority of Moon's followers are Caucasian, in their early 20s, and from middle-income families.

#### Organizational Structure

The church reports that it operates one hundred twenty communal centers in cities around the United States,<sup>6</sup> and most members live in these centers. The church provides for their daily needs: food, clothing, and medical care. In return, they proselytize and work in various church

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<sup>5</sup>The Church's own internal publication, The Day of Hope News, has consistently estimated the total full-time membership at two thousand. The monthly circular is designed to build morale among members.

<sup>6</sup>Berkeley Rice, "Messiah from Korea: Honor Thy Father Moon," Psychology Today 9, 8 (1976): 36.

enterprises. To utilize members' free labor, the church operates restaurants, gas stations, and janitorial services in several large cities. In recent years, the church has reported an annual income of ten million dollars, a large part of which was derived from "donation" items like peanuts and candy that are sold door-to-door and on city streets. Flower sales are the most profitable venture; in 1974, the Berkeley Creative Community Project grossed a half-million dollars in flower sales. Many of the more committed and older members travel in fund-raising groups throughout America selling flowers, candy, and ginseng tea to raise money for the movement.

In addition to witnessing and money-raising ventures, the church sponsors various political activities. Most involve marches and peaceful demonstrations that depict the movement as patriotic and concerned with human rights.

In July, 1974, the Unification Church participated in a three-day prayer and fast program . . . in cooperation with Rabbi Baruch Korff's Citizen's Congress for Fairness to the Presidency. After Reverend Moon issued a "statement on Watergate" on November 30, 1973, rallies in support of Nixon were held in several cities. Also, rallies against pornography have been held in New York City and San Francisco.

The church projects its anti-communist attitude through the Freedom Leadership Foundation (FLF), which was founded by Reverend Moon in 1969 because he was ". . . concerned about

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<sup>7</sup>Robbins, "The Last Civil Religions," p. 116.

the spread of Marxist thought in America. The FLF is ". . . dedicated to developing the standards of leadership necessary to advance the cause of freedom in the struggle against communism."<sup>8</sup> The major work of FLF is the publication of a bi-weekly newspaper, The Rising Tide. As "America's fastest growing freedom newspaper," it presents views on international events consistent with Reverend Moon's anti-communist stance.

The Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) was founded to acquaint students in Japan, Europe, and America with the Divine Principle. Under the guise of working to revive "Judeo-Christian foundations of democracy," revitalize education, and combat communism, CARP actually is a church recruitment agency.

By mid-1975 the Unification Church enjoyed success as one of America's new religious movements. Its literature continued to quote the Washington Star article that said the church was probably the fastest growing faith in the world. Most of the money generated through businesses and solicitations was reinvested into more income-producing ventures and resources designed to recruit more members. The church also continued to purchase real estate, securing large tracts from New York to California. The church acquired the monumental Columbia Club in New York City to serve as its

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<sup>8</sup> Moon, Unification Church, p. 15.

national headquarters. It also owns millions of dollars worth of property in prestigious Westchester County, New York, and a six-thousand-acre ranch near Booneville, California.

### Controversies Surrounding the Church

For a time it appeared that the church would continue to grow, both in numbers and affluence; however, it began to encounter severe criticism from a variety of sources. This loose coalition of detractors from all sectors of society has posed a serious threat to the movement.

One of the first critics was Rabbi Davis of White Plains, New York. Several people within his community were distressed by their children's involvement in the church. The parents contended that the Unification Church implemented brainwashing to fill its ranks. Their conclusions were based on the stark changes in character and personality of people who joined the movement. Rabbi Davis and other religious and community leaders throughout the country began to express their concerns through the media. Besides claiming that church members were victims of "psychological coercion," they pointed out that Reverend Moon made millions of dollars through the fund-raising efforts of his converts.

The media was--and for the most part continues to be--sympathetic to the adamant anti-cult movement.<sup>9</sup> Throughout

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<sup>9</sup>A. Shupe, Jr., R. Spielmann, and S. Stigall, "Deprogramming and the Emerging American Anti-cult Movement," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Scientific Study of Religion, Chicago, October 1977.

the past two years the press has presented critical reports on the church's indoctrination methods, often including retrospective accounts of former church members' "psychological enslavement" while with the movement.

In addition to Moon's alleged exploitation of his devoted followers, the press began to investigate his movement's economic and political ties with South Korea. Consequently, Reverend Moon's public image became that of a spiritual charlatan who lured young, naive people into his church through disreputable techniques of mind control. His aims were portrayed as those of an egomaniac, a self-conceived messiah whose ambition was to establish a world theocracy under his benevolent rule.

As the controversy over Reverend Moon and his movement continued, many parents of church members began to hire professional "deprogrammers" to retrieve their children from the bonds of the church. The deprogrammer's task is to locate and rescue--or kidnap (depending on one's perspective)--the child.<sup>10</sup> He forcibly isolates the member from external contact and attempts to persuade him to recant his faith. This process often takes several days. In many ways the deprogramming procedure resembles the methods the church is accused of employing: separation from the outside world,

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<sup>10</sup>The methods used by one professional deprogrammer are described in an unabashed biography by Ted Patrick with Tom Dulack: Let Our Children Go! (New York: Dutton, 1976).

constant assault on religious beliefs, and personalized emotional appeals. Occasionally, deprogrammers are unsuccessful and the subjects return to the church.

In response to deprogramming efforts, the church frequently has sued parents and deprogrammers whose efforts were unsuccessful. The church also has retaliated with a publicity campaign. Full-page advertisements in many East Coast newspapers asserted that deprogramming denied church members freedom to practice the religion of their choice under the First Amendment. Furthermore, they insisted that deprogramming violated the Fourteenth Amendment guarantee that no person shall be deprived of his life, liberty, or property without due process of the law. At a press conference, Dr. Mose Durst, President of the church's Creative Community Project, characterized the deprogrammers as

. . . essentially a group of racketeers who prey upon parents . . . capture individuals, and using classic brainwashing techniques attempt to break a person's religious beliefs. . . . What I'm especially concerned about is the level of escalation in the capture of our members, who are living in fear.<sup>11</sup>

If one views this dramatic polemic from a distance, the roles of protagonist and antagonist are not distinct. An opportunity arose in March 1977 to resolve in part, or at

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<sup>11</sup>Press conference called by Dr. Mose Durst, San Francisco, March 22, 1977.



least clarify the controversy between the Unification Church and its opposition when the brainwashing controversy became the focus of an unprecedented court case in San Francisco.

Parents of five church members petitioned the court for mandatory thirty-day custody of their adult children. The case provided a forum wherein the church and its detractors could present their respective positions in the dispute. Each side provided a battery of witnesses. Testifying as expert witnesses were two psychiatrists and two psychologists who examined the five church members. Two of the experts found symptoms of brainwashing and two did not. Stanford psychiatrist Dr. Samuel G. Benson and Berkeley psychologist Dr. Margaret Singer, testifying for the parents, described the five Moonies as childlike, emotionally frozen, and limited in their mental range and vocabulary. Dr. Singer noted parallels between the experiences of forty-six ex-church members she studied with those of 378 returning Korean prisoners of war she had examined previously. She said that the church practiced classic tactics of "coercive persuasion":<sup>12</sup> physical monopolization of time, a heavy emphasis on guilt, strong group pressure, repetitive indoctrination lectures, hypnotic

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<sup>12</sup>A term used by Edgar Schein, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology psychologist, to describe the experience of American civilians imprisoned by Chinese Communists between 1950 and 1956.

chanting, and no time to reflect. She said church members were not even aware they had joined a religion until the indoctrination was complete.

At the heart of the church's legal stance was the constitutional right of freedom of religion. Church lawyers said that the church had suffered undue criticism and persecution. With the help of the American Civil Liberties Union, the church based its case on the contention that joining the movement was not an outcome of being brainwashed but rather a "religious conversion." Witnesses and lawyers for the Unification Church asserted that coercion could not take place unless captivity, hypnosis, or drugs were employed. Since members were physically free to leave the church, their liberty had not been violated. Psychologist Allen Gerson and psychiatrist Harold Kaufman examined the defendants and found them to be normal, healthy, mature, creative, and happy. Lawyers for the church said the alleged brainwashing was little different from the "permissible persuasion" practiced by other religions, political and fraternal groups, businesses, and advertisers.

Robert Lifton's book Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism was often quoted by lawyers on both sides to prove or disprove brainwashing. During the twelve-day hearing there was much semantic confusion over brainwashing. It has no medical or legal definition; rather, it is a nebulous term frequently used to describe techniques of

persuasion employed by many religions, large corporations, the military, advertising, and other institutions. Lifton notes:

When confronted with the endless discussion of "brainwashing," I am sometimes reminded of the Zen Buddhist maxim: The more we think about it, the less we understand it.

For despite the vicissitudes of brainwashing, the process which gave rise to the name is very much a reality.<sup>13</sup>

The process of thought reform (Lifton's term for the official Chinese Communist program of szuhsiang kai-tsao) ". . . has emerged as one of the most powerful efforts at human manipulation ever undertaken."<sup>14</sup> Thought reform has an organized, comprehensive, and deliberate character, as well as a unique blend of energetic and ingenious psychological techniques.

The case failed to produce any legal parameters for brainwashing or its correlative terms, thought reform and coercive persuasion. (Numerous other court cases and Congressional investigations concerned with the issue likewise have failed.) The court was unable to answer whether or not the church's recruitment techniques have an organized, comprehensive, and deliberate character equivalent to thought reform or coercive persuasion.

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<sup>13</sup>Robert Jay Lifton, Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1961), pp. 3-4.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

Although the brainwashing issue was the focal point of the trial, it did not weigh heavily in the decision of the presiding judge, who ruled that preservation of the family was of paramount importance. In granting the parents thirty-day custody, S. Lee Vavarius said, "We're talking about the essence of civilization here--mother, father, child. . . . The child is a child even though a parent may be 90 and the child 60."<sup>15</sup>

The Unification Church appealed the decision. Within a month of Vavarius' ruling the state District Court of Appeals granted a writ of prohibition against the conservatorship order. One Appeals Court judge said the central question was whether one set of adults can tell another set of adults what to do. His characterization of the problem is not the last word but portends what lies ahead. The moral and legal questions are unsettled and will probably remain so for some time. The church certainly will be involved in future court cases centered on what the press calls the "battle for mind control."

Church leaders currently are directing much of their attention and resources towards responding to Congressional investigations. For the past two years, the International Relations Subcommittee has been probing into the church's

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<sup>15</sup>Craig Waters, "Bringing Home the Moonies: The Body Snatch," New Times, June 10, 1977.

political and financial connections with the Korean government, more particularly the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. Numerous questions remain unresolved. The future of the movement's tax-exempt status as a church could be decided by the results of these investigations.

The church vehemently denies illegal involvements. Most recently, the movement has launched a vigorous public relations campaign to counteract allegations and improve its image. Paid television specials, newspaper advertisements, and handout literature portray the church as being treated unfairly by the media, Congress, and segments of the public. Colonel Bo Hi Pak and other church leaders contend that Reverend Moon and his followers are persecuted for their unconventional beliefs. The church wants the public to understand clearly that it faces the same historical situation as unpopular new religions of prior eras, like the Mormons and earliest Christians. To augment their reconciliation with society, many church leaders are taking nationwide tours. They speak on college campuses with ministers of traditional mainline churches as well as any audience willing to listen to a low-key presentation of their beliefs and goals. Speakers emphasize that America has lost its original direction and values. But Reverend Moon's vision can spark a moral and spiritual rebirth of a God-centered nation.

### CHAPTER III

#### A DESCRIPTION OF RECRUITMENT

##### The Encounter

Most potential recruits are first contacted by church members in public places. Initial encounters are made by approaching strangers on the street, on a college campus, or on public transportation systems. As a member approaches a stranger, he casually and cheerfully introduces himself: "Hi, my name is. . . . What's yours?" "Where are you from?" The stranger, perhaps a little perplexed by the member's bold approach, answers and shakes hands. The member maintains direct eye contact and displays keen interest in the stranger's replies.

More questions are asked: "Are you a student or do you work?" "What are you interested in?" A typical response to the stranger's reply is, "Wow! that's great, John!" or some similar compliment, often accompanied by a pat on the back. If other members are in the immediate area, they are beckoned to be introduced. "Edward, this is John. He is from. . . . He has been doing. . . ." Edward says, "Hi, John" and shakes John's hand. Edward also asks John getting-to-know-you questions.

The stranger, being curious about his new acquaintances, asks them what it is they do. "We are trying to build a community where we can live together in joy, peace, and brotherhood. It is called Creative Community Project."

The stranger is invited to dinner that evening to meet other members of the Family. "We are having a special vegetarian dinner, and there will be other people there with the same interests as yours." If it is close to dinner time, the member accompanies his guest to the Family house; otherwise, he is given detailed directions on how to find it. The stranger is asked for his phone number, even if he cannot come to dinner. If he is unable to come but is not blatantly uninterested, he is further encouraged: "Well, the friend you have to meet could come, too." "Couldn't you do that another time?" "I'm sure you will be glad you came."

After arriving for dinner, the guest is greeted enthusiastically. He is asked to sign his name in the guest book and to leave his phone number, address, and name of the Family member he first met.

Sitting in small circles on the living room floor, members and guests chat before dinner. Members ask guests more questions about their vocations, avocations, or spiritual inclinations. The guest's first encounter remains with him as his host throughout the evening. Maggie says to her guest, "I found what I was looking for when I came here."

She had met a psychic reader in Mexico and asked him to make spiritual contact with her recently deceased mother. "He told me I would meet a woman named Nona. The psychic told her that this woman would be the key to her destiny.

I was walking through Sproul Plaza near where you met me today. Onni was standing next to an International Ideal City sign. She smiled and told me her name. I knew right away that's who the psychic meant. I've been here two and one-half years. I have no desire to go anywhere because things are always changing here. New people are always coming. I think this is the direction of your spiritual path. So many of your questions will be answered!

About fifty members and guests gather around a long serving table. Immediately, songbooks are distributed, a page number is announced, and everyone sings "You Are My Sunshine," "If I Had a Hammer," and "Save the Country." Members clap and yell "yea" after each song. An aura of exuberance and spontaneity pervades the room. The evening's spokesman says, "Good evening, everybody!" and members respond quickly in unison, "Good evening!" The spokesman continues:

We have a really full evening planned. After dinner, the world's greatest entertainment, and it's the world's greatest because it's us! [Members cheer.] Then we have a short lecture to tell you what we are all about, the principles we live by that give us all this joy, love, harmony, and unity. After the lecture we will show slides of some of the things we are doing together here and at Booneville, our six-hundred-acre farm up in Mendicino County. After the slide show refreshments will be served and there will be time to find out more about our farm at Booneville so, everybody, enjoy your meal and have a good evening. [Members cheer once again.]



Guests are encouraged to join in the after-dinner entertainment. Often members and guests form groups to do a number from the songbook. A well-practiced trio of members plays instruments and sings. Everyone cheers and applauds after each introduction and performance. The festive mood continues as the entertainment ends and the lecturer is given a thorough introduction--one laced with his personal qualities and credentials.

Dr. Durst is the President of Creative Community Project. He is an English professor at Laney College and has studied psychology under Abraham Maslow. He is a founder of a business consulting firm. Here he is, our own Dr. Durst.

The Family greets Dr. Durst with sustained cheers and applause as he comes forward. He speaks eloquently, without referring to notes, and he uses humorous gestures and analogies to emphasize his main points. Members in the audience respond with frequent laughter and applause. The theme of Durst's lecture is best expressed by these remarks:

We find whenever we contribute our unique value and ability for the happiness of all, centered on the conscience, we realize our individual value and our collective value--our spiritual as well as our physical fulfillment.

Immediately after the lecture, Veronica shows slides of Family members engaged in activities on their farm situated in Booneville, California. Members are seen playing, hiking, and working together in a cooperative spirit. One slide depicts the construction of a footbridge spanning a creek. Veronica relates:

I had the opportunity to work on this bridge. It was a real egalitarian work situation. You know, before joining the Family I had been involved heavily in Women's Liberation. Well, here it's a real human liberation. The bridge-building bridged gaps socially, psychologically, and emotionally. Coming away from that, I felt like crying.

If you liked what was said here tonight, the next question is, how does it apply to me? Whatever your perspective on the world--economic, political, or religious--we can work out the problems together! You wonder why everyone is filled with joy? Well, we are facing these problems in the world. Here is your opportunity to be a pioneer.

After the slide presentation, coffee and cookies are served. Associate membership forms lie on the coffee table. Guests are encouraged by their hosts to attend the weekend training session in Booneville. Again, if guests have an excuse for not going they are implored by members to somehow manage to go. One person said he had to work. "Could you find someone to work for you this weekend?" someone suggests. Those who plan to attend for the weekend are advised to pay as much as possible of the eighteen-dollar fee. If a guest cannot afford to pay in total, an accommodation is made. Those electing not to attend, at least in the near future, are still urged to complete the associate membership form.

While members are busy getting commitments, Ruthie notices a guest temporarily alone.

What did you think of the lecture? Are you coming for the weekend?

Yes, I think so. Uh, how long have you been with the Family?

For six weeks, says Ruthie. I was at U.C., Santa Cruz. It's like Berkeley, only smaller. People were unfriendly and not giving of themselves, so I'm really happy to be here. I went from a world-saver, to an actress, to here.

What do you mean, a world-saver?

Oh, I organized a lot of ecology movements and peave marches in high school. But then people would just pat you on the head and say how glad they were to see you being constructive. This is different. At least we have a chance to do something positive.

Well, what is the goal of Creative Community Project?

To bring as much joy to the world as there is here. That is why we want people to come to dinner. When you talk to them on campus about brotherhood, love, and togetherness--those words don't have any meaning anymore. But when they come and see how happy everyone is here they want to come up to Booneville.

### The Elephant Bus to Booneville

After Friday evening's activities, members and training-session participants board the bus going to the weekend training session. Members and their guests sing continuously for most of the three-hour ride. The members sustain enthusiasm by cheering at the end of songs and by volunteering to sing solos. After finishing a solo, a member "passes the blessing" on by choosing the next member

or guest to sing a solo. Although weary, newcomers participate readily and appear to enjoy the trip. The bus passes a brightly colored sign that says "International Ideal City," and it swings from the highway onto a road leading to the farm. All members break into a spontaneous chorus:

Booneville, Booneville, Oh such a beautiful land!  
 Work for your brothers and you will see, the  
 Heavenly Kingdom is at hand. Work for your brothers  
 and you will see, the Heavenly Kingdom is at hand.

The singing continues as the bus approaches a swinging gate. Cultivated land is surrounded by a high metal fence. The bus passes about two acres of various garden plants. Someone comments, "Look how much those tomatoes have grown! We just planted them a few weeks ago." Another adds, "Everything grows so well here on the land."

After passing an apple orchard and a bean field, the bus stops in a dirt parking lot. Members and their respective guests walk across a swinging bridge over a creek that separates the farmland from a large grassy area. Here most of the events and group activity occur. The lawn is bordered by the creek bank and shade trees to the west, an open wild grain field to the north, and the first of a series of rolling hills to the east. Sloping upward the lawn meets a slight cliff overlooking the creek on the south. To the right, as the bridge is crossed, are two fifty-foot trailer houses, a small open area, then a converted chicken barn that serves as the auditorium. All are on the southern side

of the central area. The Chicken Palace, as the auditorium is called, serves as the lecture hall. A bandstand has been erected at the head of the room, and rows of folding chairs occupy the center area. Those who lecture or give testimonies stand between the chairs and bandstand. Benches and an oil-burning stove occupy the rear. At night, space is cleared for men to sleep on the floor. The first trailer serves as a sleeping place for women. They, too, sleep in bags on the floor. The trailers are bare of furniture, and during the day folding chairs are set in rows and serve as a lecture area for the week-long workshop.

#### "The Greatest Weekend"

The morning after arrival members accompany guests to a large circle forming on the lawn. One hundred and fifty people join hands and sing, "Oh What a Beautiful Morning." Joseph steps forward to address the group. "Good morning, everybody." Members yell in return, "Good morning!" He asks, "Are you ready for the greatest weekend of your lives?" "Yes!" is the resounding answer from all the members, who make up at least half the circle.

Joseph reads from his clipboard the group assignments. Newcomers are assigned to groups comprising a leader and an even balance between eight and twelve new people and family members. Cheers come from the circle as each group is announced. Following a prayer, the circle breaks into groups.

Maggie, a group leader, gathers her group together. "Good morning everybody!" She smiles into each person's eyes. "Let's form a huddle; everyone squeeze together." They form a circle with arms draped over shoulders; familiar and unfamiliar faces gaze at one another. Maggie says:

This is going to be the best group. It's like we are going to be married to each other for the next thirty-six hours. Give one hundred percent all the time. I've learned as a group leader that we can get the most out of the weekend by giving one hundred percent, no matter where we are or what we are going. Okay?"

The family members agree, "Okay!"

Each person is asked to give his name. Before doing so, he must recite the names of all persons given thus far. Members clap and "yea" after each person's try. Maggie says, "Everyone has to have a buddy. We are just trying an experiment." Each newcomer is paired with a Church member, usually the one he met initially on the street.

Stay with your buddies all the time, even when you go to the bathroom. We are not spying on you; it's so we can be as close as possible. Another thing we do for unity is the choo-choo chant. It goes like this: "Choo-choo-choo, choo-choo-choo, choo, choo, choo--yea, pow!" Let's all do it.

In unison, held hands move quickly up and down to the rhythm of the chant. The instant companions laugh and smile together.

In twos, threes, and fours, hands clasped, the group moves to a preselected area on the lawn where breakfast is served mess-camp style off long tables. After being seated

all join hands and sing two or three songs<sup>1</sup> and repeat the choo-choo chant. The mood is light-hearted; everyone appears comfortable and waits for Maggie to indicate what is to happen next. She says, "We can learn a lot if we give each other our complete attention. Let's all say what we were doing and what led up to our coming here." Members are the first to volunteer their comments. Abigail tells the group that she had been into "sisterhood"--the women's movement--before coming to the Family. "It was all talk and no action. Here I can actualize my ideals."

Teresa relates, "At first I was negative. I'd just come to the workshop because my friend wanted me to. I went home, thought it over, and returned--always looking for that good feeling in my heart."

After each person is finished speaking, everyone cheers "yea!" and claps.

#### The Keynote Lecture: Falling in Love, Together

The groups convene the breakfast discussion with choo-choo chants and walk to the Chicken Palace. Singing begins even before everyone arrives. Members join in the chorus as they walk through the door and hand their buddy-newcomer a

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<sup>1</sup>"Today" is one of the many "happy" song that the groups sing each time they meet. The lyrics include: ". . . a million tomorrows shall all pass away, ere we forget all the joy that is ours, today."

songbook turned to the correct page. Members give non-members they have yet to meet a smile or hello. After two or three more songs are sung, Theodore steps to the bandstand and speaks into the microphone.

Good morning, everybody. . . . Don't just observe, participate. Also, really stick close to your group. This is how to have the best possible experience. The leaders of the groups have a lot of experience being group leaders, so really give it all you can!

Members cheer and applaud in response to Theodore's announcement and again when the first lecturer is introduced.

"Maria is our eldest sister. For the past five years she has been working along with Onni and Dr. Durst. All of us in the Family look to her for guidance and inspiration." Maria vivaciously acknowledges the applause and speaks with self-assurance.

We speak of love and happiness here. That is the purpose of the weekend, to find love and happiness. The first thing we have to do is open ourselves up. That takes commitment. It's a little bit scary. The first point about being happy is "being here now," as Theodore said. Really open up and participate.

To emphasize "opening up" she gives the analogy of a seed breaking through the soil as a sprout.

When he was a little seed, he knew everything about being a seed. He was secure. Breaking out is really scary. The seed was "afraid" to break out of his secure, familiar surroundings but was glad he did when he found out how beautiful the world was above ground. Our family is that way. Like that little seed, you have maximum creative potential. This weekend is a great chance to open up, to actually be all those things if you open up. All that wonderful potential. . . . I hope you can be happy and fall in love with you. That is the purpose of the weekend--to fall in love.

We are not studying from one point of view but from



the largest view. It takes a tremendous amount of open-mindedness to know truth. It requires realizing that you can see more than you previously have. If we can really understand ourselves from a whole perspective, maybe we can discover a human way of life. It's really cool to say truth is relative because then you can do what you want. But, if truth isn't relative, then it isn't so comfortable. To find truth and actualize it begins by following conscientious common sense. A natural person is one who lives by conscientious common sense. If you are a natural person, you are at home anywhere in the cosmos--you can relate to everything. You don't have to be a different person for each occasion. Our desire for this weekend is to put conscientious common sense to work. We are not interested in theories of happiness; we want to be happy! [The audience cheers "yeah!"]

When you follow your conscience, you feel good because you are good. Your conscience is keeping you in touch on so many dimensions--always a valuable person, making a contribution. There is a ripple effect: when you talk with a person, pretty soon everyone is talking and exchanging ideas. You put out good vibes and everyone becomes interested in you . . . one's unique ability for the happiness of all. You make your life significant in the moment by freely contributing. You pour yourself out. Imagine everyone doing that, everyone smiling. Until you clarify your goals and values, you can't be free. Once you are centered on the conscience, you are free to do anything or go anywhere. [People shake their heads affirmatively.]

Maria asks, "Why do we have conflict?" She notes that when people are not centered on their consciousness; there is a conflict of ideas and interests. A conflict base is separation and reaction leading to destructive results, whereas a common base unifies interaction and leads to constructive results.

How can we bring about a common base? There is only one way to prefer conscientious common sense rather than one's own sense and benefit. The real goal and purpose of the weekend is more than just that. It's love! Your parents loved you when you were born and they didn't even know you! The nature of your parents' heart is to hope you are fulfilled and that

you become all you can. We have to love each other like our parents. We have to support each other as our parents support us. That's why it's so important to hold hands and love each other. So we can finally begin to grow, to find out what is the cause of love. If it is energy plus love it is infinite. We want to explore the source of love energy. This is what religions traditionally call God. I hope you all fall in love.

### Understanding God's Situation

The audience jumps up applauding and breaks into "My Love."<sup>2</sup> A violin, clarinet, guitar, and drums fill the air with excitement again. Members and guests hold hands, sway to the music, and smile at one another. The morning session ends with a fervent prayer before all leave the Chicken Palace for a walk to the top of the hill overlooking the training-session area. Maggie tells her group, "As you walk, try to appreciate all the beauty you see because it is God telling you he loves you."

At the summit the groups clasp hands, form a large circle, and sing songs out over the scenic valley below. Activity subsides when someone gestures down to the farm area. "There is the future home of International Ideal City where someday people from all over the world will come together to live and learn in brotherhood and harmony!" Members cheer and jump up and down. A hush ensues as a prayer asking God to make Ideal City a reality is offered.

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<sup>2</sup>"Once I thought that love was meant for everyone else but me. Now that only goes to show how wrong we all can be. . . . For now my love grows stronger every day. . . ."

The groups then scurry down the hill and gather for discussions.

Once again, members and prospective members join hands and sit in a circle as Maggie leads them in song and prayer. She asks, "Who was inspired by the lecture?" Members volunteer their respective inspirations and newcomers also are encouraged to speak. Abigail, nineteen, a member for about one-half a year, says:

The lecture brought a lot of things together. I've learned if you're centered on your conscience then everything goes right. I used to get mad about seeds that didn't sprout and grow [newcomers who do not become members], but now I realize they will eventually grow. In the Family, if you fall they don't say, "Get out of here," but they pick you up and give you support.

Fred, here for his first weekend, says, "Being here has already changed my life. I was going to do good by becoming a teacher and then later going to live in the woods by myself. But now I know I will have to join a family like this Family." Members yell "yea," clap, rejoin hands, and gently sway while singing: "We love you, Fred, oh yes we do! We don't love anyone as much as you. When you're not with us, we're blue. Oh, Fred, we love you!" The group always claps and cheers when a new person reveals his inspiration, states a positive idea, or sings a solo.

After a prayer, the groups return to the Chicken Palace and sit together. All groups sing three or four resounding songs. They are well synchronized with the band, and members

know the songs by heart. Dr. Durst, who is to deliver the lectures for the remainder of the weekend, is given an eloquent introduction. He then begins by asking,

What is our nature? Are we just blinking lights in the dark, just coming and going, or are we part of something bigger? God's nature has a qualitative dimension. We know the Creator through the mind and the heart. The goal of every human is to embody a truth of universal value. We have to understand that from a truthful base. The motivation for God creating--for us to do anything--is . . .

"Joy!" members of the audience cry out in unison when Dr. Durst places on an easel a placard that reads, "Joy is good feeling by stimulation of truth, beauty, love, and comfort through substantialized idea or desire."

In other words, when you see something beautiful, your heart is moved. There is a jolt. [Durst makes a gesture of clutching his heart.] It's not "Excuse me sir, would you translate that?" [Everyone laughs.] The value of human life is the degree to which we embody truth, beauty, and love. Our relationship with God is not an abstract ideal but one with heart. If humans fail to act in a truthful, loving way, with universal heart, God suffers and we suffer. Human life has been petty--humans living for themselves. Few have understood God's situation. Joy and suffering depend on our responsibility. All things depend on ourselves!

At the conclusion of Durst's remarks, members and guests jump up immediately to sing as the band plays "Gonna Build a Kingdom." Training-session staff, with the exception of group leaders, join him to lead the singing. After two or three more songs, he intones a serious, emphatic prayer whose content reinforces points made in the lecture.

Small groups quickly re-form outdoors for additional

songs and a prayer. Each person holds the hand of the person on either side and gives undivided attention to Maggie.

Did everyone understand the lecture? We wouldn't be here if we did not have a good relationship with God and want to know how this can come about. That is the value of the Principle. It tells us where, how, and why.

Lunches are brought on paper plates. Members of the group break up their sandwiches, oranges, cookies--any food that can be passed around. Newcomers notice the practice and also symbolically share their food. Occasionally, the same halved and quartered parts return to their sources. During lunch, members and guests share insights and inspirations received from the lecture. Carrie says:

Before I joined this Family, I remember wanting to be by myself, to just get away from everybody [she gestures, pushing away]. I remember going to some very beautiful spots and seeing some of the most fantastic sunsets. But there was something missing. I didn't know what it was, but it just wasn't complete. It is like Dr. "D" says in the lectures: There is a natural desire for people to be with other people . . . we do need each other. I was looking at the creek in the river the other day and thought how much our relationship to God is like that reflection. We are reflections of God. We have to try to be perfect reflections. Sometimes the waters get muddied because we do not completely reflect God.

Carrie gulps and smiles when members, joined by newcomers, sing "We love you, Carrie, oh, yes we do," to show their appreciation for her sincerity.

"A Universal Point of View"

Maggie announces that it is time to play dodgeball. When the group stands, still holding hands, she says, "Let's do the choo-choo chant really loud so everyone can hear it!" It is loud, and arms move up and down in unified motion. Carrie's group joins other exuberant groups in a large field across the lawn. Two teams are formed, each having a pre-selected captain who calls for volunteers to play various positions. "Who wants to play front line?" he calls out. "I do, I do!" A number of members run up to him with their arms waving, anxious to be picked. The scene is reminiscent of young school children hoping their teachers will choose them to be lunch-hour gladiators. Members prod their buddies to join in the selection ritual. The captain appoints a half dozen cheerleaders, who then lead an elaborate chant. One side is designated the Fury Fighters. Everyone is reminded to yell throughout the game his respective team's chant: "Fight, Fury, Fight."

The game is very aggressive but any dissention between opposing players is quelled quickly by staff members. Non-players circulate as the game progresses, reminding newcomers to chant and clap. At game's end, the procedure is repeated, position are assigned, cheers are given, and another game begins. When all the members of one team are eliminated, teams quickly switch sides for the start of another exhilarating game. Afterwards, all link hands in a large circle.

They chant, "A victory for one is a victory for all! My victory is your victory! Victory, Victory, Victory!"

Prior to the next lecture, buddies are given time together. Members ask their guests if they have any thoughts, problems, or questions about the Family or the Principle. At this time the member often explains what being in the Family means to him.

"Hurry to the Chicken Palace," someone shouts. "Song practice is beginning!" The band greets arrivals with "To Be Alive." They scurry to their assigned places, open song-books, and join the tumultuous singing. A half dozen songs are sung with unwavering jubilation. Dr. Durst mounts the platform amid cheers and applause; the essential points of his lecture are once again emphasized with placards.

The greatest value in any culture is sacrifice for others, action that is valuable for everyone. All human conflict comes from opposition of ideas because of lack of a universal point of view. The solution is to grow that mind, grow that heart so we can come to be a people of value. The highest maturity is a universal heart. Everyone is meant to have a universal parental heart. God is ultimately the True Parent, but God is invisible! He has to work through true parents. The Family is the basis for the ideal community and multiplication of love and value. Before mankind reached the point of perfection and maturity, there was a misdirection of that love on all levels. People are interested only in themselves. From family to nation, the world is turned around from what it should be!

When you actualize the truth through good deeds, you grow strong spiritually. This is the arena in which we grow our spirit. What is bound on earth is bound in heaven. Anyone who sets a high standard of love reflects God's love.

Durst's voice increases slowly in tempo and pitch as he

concludes:

Everything starts with one. If we make ourselves new, if one person embodies the standard of truth, there is hope for the whole world.

Band and staff members lead, appropriately, an emphatic rendition of "There's a New World Coming." Groups hear another prayer, sing two more songs, and disperse for more small-group discussion. When Maggie addresses her group, her eyes focus briefly on each person.

When the world is restored [to God], there will be bells ringing in the streets. There will be much celebration. All people may not understand what has happened, but they will know that it is something good. Like it says in the Bible, the lion and the lamb will sleep together. That's how the Ideal World will be. Can you imagine that? Years ago there were only eight members of the Family. Onni was one of them. She would go out into the streets to tell people about the Ideal World. She would talk half in English, half in Korean. People couldn't understand her, but they came to realize the value of what she was saying because she was so sincere and giving. For two years they prepared dinner every night, but no one came! That determination and suffering helps to sustain us now.

Following the discussion the Chicken Palace scene is repeated: enthusiastic songs, a fervent prayer, and a warm welcome for Dr. Durst, who says:

The great hope is that we can be new people--the hope of becoming individual and collective spiritual beings if we can bind together to end the sorrow, crimes, and mistakes of the past. If we can only become motivated by that universal law, by that universal love. . . . We are not just Americans; we are not just the Kowalski Family; we are not just of this time, of this place; we are of all times and all places. We become universal human beings so God can work through us. We become the embodiment of God's value. The man and the woman who are mature are the embodiment of God's nature. We can be as God. All we



have to do is to realize our God-like nature. The responsibility lies on each and every one of us. We can close and diminish ourselves or we can open ourselves and feel our full value. All we have to do is to understand, to feel, and to act, from the largest point of view. We can then have everything. If you change yourself, you change the whole world; everything in relation to you changes. All you have got to do is recognize the truth and embrace it.

Well-chosen songs follow: "Move Forward" and "The Impossible Dream." Members, smiling, scrutinize newcomers. In closing the last lecture, Dr. Durst asks God to help them realize fully their lives and actualize the truth. Occasionally, members murmur during the prayers, "Yes, Father . . . yes, Father!"

#### "Truth and Righteousness"

The training groups gather again to form a large circle on the lawn. Maria and Glenn are at the heart of the circle. While songleading she whispers to him, "Really zap it to them." Both members and guests appear to be totally immersed in the routine series of songs, chants, and cheers.

Joseph says, "Good evening, everybody!" "Good evening," shouts the circle.

"What does everyone want?" asks Joseph.

"Truth," the members yell back.

"And what?"

"Righteousness!"

"When do you want it?"

"Now!"

Their shouts echo from the hillside. Dozens of smiling,

ecstatic people raise each other's hands skyward and rivet their attention on Joseph, who says, "Everybody have a good dinner, stay with your groups, and we will meet here afterwards."

At the dinner discussion, members and newcomers share their inspirations after the routine of choo-choo chants, songs, prayer, and sharing of food. A young sailor on shore leave says:

You know, before I came up here they said it would be the best weekend of my life. I thought, "Oh, sure." I've had a lot of great weekends, gotten drunk. Well, up to now this has been a really great weekend. People really do love each other here and there isn't anywhere else like it. And I love everyone here! And I've never felt this way before.

After dinner, each group prepares a skit to be presented before the entire workshop. Buddies work on separate renditions that fit the theme of the group skit. The theme is designed to relate to themes of the previous lectures and discussions: actualizing the truth, getting rid of negativism and skepticism, building an ideal world, the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, and joining the Family. The skits are performed in a gay, supportive atmosphere. Everyone cheers and applauds. Those groups that have not presented a skit beg excitedly to be selected next. "Who wants to be chosen next?" asks Joseph. People shout, "Eavie's group!" Others call, "Maggie's group!" or "Theodore's group!"

After the skits, two of the older members are asked to share their personal testimonies to life in the Family.

Maria's story is about her first days with the Family. She tells the training session that when coming to Booneville for the first time she was very confused about love. "I didn't know if anyone loved me." Using remarkable imagery she recalled sitting by a tree, crying, and feeling very "negative and skeptical" about everything, including the Principle.

It was so logical. I was frustrated because I couldn't find anything wrong with it. I kept asking myself, "Who are these people? Why are they so happy?" What's more, when I stopped forgetting to be skeptical, I realized I was having a good time!

She describes a visionary experience wherein God was personified in a tree. She looked at the movement of its leaves and felt "God's energy" in everything. "I realized God was in that tree. He was crying along with me. He was so bashful, like a child, but He wanted me to know how much He cared. He whispered, 'I love you, I love you, I love you.'" The audience is awed by her exquisite account, and many spectators are in tears. The entire training group sits quietly for a seemingly endless minute; then the groups gather in a large circle. All join hands and wait to hear what is to happen next. As "Kumbaya" is sung, everyone sways back and forth in unison, feeling content yet tired. The circle breaks after an intense prayer. Joseph asks the Father to help them achieve the goals they are working toward together.

The small groups meet for the last time to share personal inspirations or experiences. "Something that stands

out or just a general story of life," Maggie suggests. The members are the first volunteers. Abigail says that Maria's story was an inspiration. "She had her doubts intellectually but followed her heart and look at her today." Teresa admitted that she also had problems during her early days at Booneville. "At first I had difficulty with the rules, following them and all, but now there is no conflict. Everything is so peaceful."

Fred is the first newcomer to comment: "I never thought one could fall in love so quickly, but I love you all!" Members clap and cheer softly their approval of his inspiration. Jack relates that at first he felt dubious towards the choo-choo chant and the repetitive rules, but he noted that it takes time to understand them. Abigail explains that she, too, had reservations during her first weekend. "I refused to play dodgeball because it seemed so barbaric." She thought the victory chant was equally disgusting. She and others explain to Fred, Jack, and the other new people that the chants have a purpose--to "create unity."

Maggie concludes Saturday's final meeting: "I've fallen in love with my group." She encourages everyone to "Give one hundred percent tomorrow and make it an even greater day than today." She recites a prayer and everyone says goodnight. Buddies leave together--girls to the trailer ? and men to the Chicken Palace, to sleep side by side on the floor.

Another Great Day

The following morning, two members stroll through each sleeping area playing instruments and singing "When the red-red robin comes bob, bob-bobbin' along. . . . Wake up! Wake up, you sleepy head, Get up, get out of bed. . . ." Before members and their weekend guests have a chance to wipe the sleep from their eyes, the touring minstrels announce, "Hurry everybody! Let's all meet on the lawn in five minutes."

Sunday's schedule is nearly identical to Saturday's. As everyone arrives, leaders immediately gather their groups together and form another huge circle. The day begins with simple calisthenics: stretching exercises followed by groups racing each other around the perimeter of the circle. A lighthearted yet intense mood prevails. Joseph steps forward to lead "You Are My Sunshine" and the choo-choo, yea-pow chant. He exhorts all to have another great day, and the gathering disperses for group meetings.

Participants remain with their groups throughout the day, and they rush together from place to place singing, chanting, cheering, listening to lectures, holding discussions, playing dodgeball, and taking part in other activities. As members usher their guests from group discussion to lecture and back to discussions, they ask their buddies, "What did you think of the lecture? Isn't it beautiful here? Do you have any questions about anything?" After dodgeball,

a half hour is set aside for buddies to be alone. The member invites his guest to remain at Booneville for a week-long training session. He assures him:

It is a great experience, and you will be really glad you stayed. It isn't as intense as the weekend [training session]. There will be plenty of time to work on the farm and go deeper into the Principle. If you can stay, it can probably be arranged so I can stay, too. We would probably be in the same group again! Wouldn't that be great?

The tumultuous celebrations in the Chicken Palace continue. Prior to each of Dr. Durst's four lectures, 150 people jump up and down, singing to the accompaniment of the four-piece band. Since members have memorized all the songs and sing them every day, their voices blend into a unified chorus. Often songs--both religious and popular--are broken into parts, and various sections of the room sing each in turn.

These assemblies are managed with precision and are reminiscent of a musical play. Each time Durst returns to the podium, he is greeted with cheers and applause. With a graceful demeanor, like a triumphant soldier, he smiles gracefully to an admiring audience. To guests, the cheers and applause have become commonplace but no less enthusiastic. Durst first notes that nearly all people have a pessimistic outlook on the future world. His first placard reads:

1. Common people
2. Conscientious people
3. Christians

## 4. Scientists

## 5. Historians

Durst says:

Common people and conscientious people see little hope for the future. They are experiencing a breakdown in value. Christians see some hope for a new heaven and earth, but there is a sense of deep despair underlying their optimism. Scientists are pessimistic. They are learning more and more about less and less. Historians see cultures coming and going in cycles. Cultures are based on a framework of value. They rise and fall rapidly because of failure in value. Toynee is one historian who sees hope in a universal value structure, but he fails to realize that the basis for it is already here! Now is our chance for a unified world. [Cheers.]

He holds up a chart showing a large, green globe labeled

"The Ideal Garden--A Unified World of Many Independent Nations."

If you build an Ideal Garden you need ideal gardeners. People who have the knowledge and care. . . . If you harness human resources for human welfare we can accomplish anything! If we align ourselves with that ideal we become the makers of human history. By acting in accordance with a universal value structure we direct that destiny. [Cheers.] We can inspire America to return to its idealism. The vision of America has been corrupted, but it can be revitalized. The world follows America for the wrong reasons. It should follow us for our righteousness, not our decadence.

There is nothing as powerful as an ideal whose time has come except those who embody that ideal. We have to go forward with strength and courage. We have got to put ourselves on the line with what we really believe is true. All it takes is determination and heart. All significant change in the last forty years has come from the Bay Area. If you move San Francisco, you move California. If you move California, you move the nation. If you move the nation, you move the world. Good guys have always lost because they believe bad guys are supposed to win. This is a new age where good guys can stand up for goodness. Someone has to take the first step. We want you to be those people. All we have to do is build that Ideal World!

The audience jumps up, cheers, and immediately bursts into "Gonna Build a Kingdom."

The post-lecture-group discussions also follow a routine procedure: a choo-choo, yea-pow chant followed by a series of songs and an exchange of ideas, insights, and feelings. Guests are again encouraged to make positive contributions to the discussion. Members respond to inspirations with more cheers and the "We Love You" song. Maggie and other group leaders listen carefully to each person's comments, adding their own viewpoint or interpretation afterwards.

Before the final two lectures members are asked to come forward and share with everyone their personal story of how they joined the Family. Like Maria's testimony, these accounts are thoughtfully prepared and quite sincere. Most center on how their lives were changed in a "positive direction" after becoming part of the Family. Some relate extraordinary experiences of how they touched the lives of others and learned more about themselves. Others tell about the excitement and surprises that occur during an ordinary day as a member. Betty describes life with the flower-selling team. Once, while traveling the seacoast towns north of the Bay Area, she was having a hard time selling her day's allotment. After hours of effort she still had a big bundle of flowers and felt sad, since it was almost time for the Family's van to pick her up. She decided to try one more



place, a quaint little bar next to the beach, and, miraculously, a group of elderly female tourists bought all her flowers. Betty tells everyone how elated she was and the audience responds with cheers and applause.

### Sunday's Finale

After the last lecture and group discussion, members and guests reassemble in the Chicken Palace for a final medley of songs and an extravagant invitation to attend the "supercalifragalistic" Booneville training session, which is "introduced" by Joseph. In an atmosphere of mock suspense, he elaborates on all the highlights one can expect to experience in Booneville during the coming week. Members stomp their feet and snap their fingers in rhythm. Theodore, personifying the training session, steals through a door behind the stage wearing a pith helmet. When he bursts through a banner of paper stretched across imaginary goal posts, everyone cheers and laughs. He also invites all the guests to remain and become part of the advanced group, which comprises people who have been in Booneville at least a week. After four weeks at the training session, they return to the Bay Area as members of the Family.

A huge circle is formed around the perimeter of the Chicken Palace, Theodore quickly calls out the names of persons in the advanced group, and they step into the circle. He shouts, "Let's hear it for the advanced group!" When

the circle cheers and applauds, members of the advanced group begin to jump up and down and continue to move about the room shouting and hugging each other. Their stomping raises dust from the floor and clouds the room. After a few minutes they rejoin the circle and the "newest additions" to the Family are told to come inside the circle when their names are called. The "newest additions" are weekend guests who have signed the Associate Membership form. Nearly every guest signs as a formality and even though many do not plan to stay in Booneville for the coming week, their appearance in the center of the circle conveys the impression that they are remaining. Again, the jubilant scene is repeated: hugs, cheers, and dust.

Theodore announces that it is time for chicken dinner, after which everyone will prepare to leave Booneville except those electing to remain for the week-long training session.<sup>3</sup>

The final moments of the weekend training session are hectic. Last-minute arrangements for return rides are made, and members who are leaving say goodbye to those who are staying.

After the elephant bus and the fleet of Family vans and cars leave, the week-long training session participants

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<sup>3</sup>Family members return to their respective communal living centers and resume their daily routines. During the ensuing week, they will meet people in public places and invite them to dinner. Others will spend their days selling flowers or working in one of the Family's many business enterprises.

report to the Chicken Palace. To no one's surprise, the meeting follows a familiar pattern: circles are formed, hands are clasped, chants are intoned, and light, cheerful songs are sung.

Theodore is in charge until Noah, the director, returns to Booneville on Tuesday morning. About a dozen other members stay to serve as group leaders and assistants. Theodore separates the group into temporary clean-up crews, and crew leaders then gather their groups into huddles. Judy, full of enthusiasm, says to her group, "This is going to be the best week for everybody. We will do a really great clean-up job, o.k.? Let's lick up the dirt we don't get!" After the clean-up, everyone reassembles at sunset for a silent trek up the hill. Another circle is silently formed, and Theodore reverently describes the Family's goals, including International Ideal City. Group members descend the hill arm in arm while singing the lyrics of "Exodus": "This land is ours, God gave this land to us. . . ."

They return to a waiting campfire around which an

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<sup>4</sup>During my observations, between fifty and seventy people attended the week-long training sessions. Usually about one-fourth of the eighty to ninety guests who came to Booneville each weekend decided to stay. Approximately one-half of those spending one week at Booneville remained for three more weeks--the usual length of indoctrination into the Family. Thus, a typical representation of training-session participants included fifteen to twenty people beginning their first week, twenty-five to thirty prospective members beginning their second, third, or fourth week, (and ten to fifteen members.)

evening of singing is the day's final activity. Members volunteer to sing in duets and trios. The group is tired yet happy, and holds high expectations for the coming week. Theodore makes one last announcement before everyone goes to his respective sleeping area.

We have a nice tradition in the Family. We begin each day by "jumping it," which is getting up and saying good morning to Heavenly Father with a smile on your face. I know it's sometimes hard, but when you do there are seventy smiles right back at you!

This chapter has described the recruitment career of prospective members beginning when they first encounter the Family through a weekend experience at Booneville. The next chapter uses an analytical framework to retrace these scenes and events and then examines the final stage of recruitment--the week-long training session.

## CHAPTER IV

### RECRUITMENT: A SOCIALLY ORGANIZED ACCOMPLISHMENT

#### Finding Prospective Members

Most recruitment into social or religious movements is through pre-existing personal relationships. Unification church members must attract people without the benefit of these prior ties. Most potential recruits are first contacted in public places. Church members are assigned to specific locations by their respective leaders to proselytize (e.g., city streets, public transportation, shopping centers, and college campuses). Since these encounters are between strangers, church members must develop immediate rapport with their contacts if they hope to develop further commitment. The member addresses the passerby with a smile or "hello." Initial greetings vary, but most characteristic is a symbolic gesture or remark that will legitimize contact with and being in the same place as the prospective recruit. The member assumes the initiative by saying something simple like, "Hi! How is it going?"

Often members are ignored by people they approach, but they usually manage to capture their encounters'

attention. Since occasional rebuttals are expected, members develop a persistent attitude. The trauma involved in walking up to a total stranger dissolves with experience. Having to continuously approach people day after day allows the members to become adept at choosing whom and when to proselytize.

The member's typical style of witnessing is friendly and direct. Usually he guides the conversation by extending flattery to and personal interest in his prospect. To characterize this enthusiastic attentiveness, a former recruit told me, ". . . They make you feel like the most important person in the world."<sup>1</sup> After a lengthy discussion, the prospect is invited to dinner at a Unification Church center. The member emphasizes that the prospect will meet others with similar interests. While intentionally vague about specific beliefs, he describes general aims in thought-provoking terms: "We are trying to build a community where we can live together in joy, peace, and brotherhood."

People who accept the dinner invitation are either escorted to the center or given explicit directions. To further ensure attendance, the member reminds guests to call if they have any difficulty getting to the center.

At the dinner gathering, the prospective recruit is

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<sup>1</sup>David Taylor, Unpublished field notes and personal communications, May-August 1975. All non-footnoted quotes in this and subsequent chapters are drawn from my field notes, which were taken while directly observing the recruitment process.

assigned a host and introduced to other church members and newcomers. The evening follows a structured routine, and as members guide their guests through the pre-arranged activities, they display continual exuberance. To convey an impression consistent with their self-definition as a joyous, dynamic community, members maintain an esprit de corps by cheering and clapping for speeches and by group singing and intense conversation.

Each member continues to cultivate a close personal relationship with his guest. He probes his background, ambitions, and interests and points out commonalities between the guest's goals and ideals and those of the church. In this regard Neil Solonen, President of the Unification Church of America, provides guidelines for proper strategy. Members of Creative Community Project follow his instructions as a basis for interaction with their prospects during all stages of the recruitment process.

Find at least one thing to which they will respond and get a hook in them. Shift to the positive. Be firm and respond to things with which they disagree, but shift to something which excites them. "What do you feel most excited about?" and "What did you find most enlightening?" are good questions to think in terms of. Write down their hooks so that the whole center knows in follow up.<sup>2</sup>

During dinner, members describe to their guests the positive aspects of life in the Family.

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<sup>2</sup>Memo from Neil Solonen to group leaders, Barrytown, New York, 1974.

It's so exciting here! Every day is a new challenge. There is so much to learn here. The Principles we study get deeper and deeper. [Members stress the compelling nature of the Divine Principle.] The Principles are charged with a fresh vision of life with purpose and meaning. Also I can apply them in my everyday life.

The members' ebullient devotion to their beliefs functions to help guests assume that the forthcoming lecture has significance for their own lives.

The lecture presentation is non-controversial and idealistic. To a young, naïve audience its overgeneralized insights can have a ring of truth. Clichés like "actualizing the truth," "following conscientious common sense," and "finding purpose and direction" seem provocative, especially within the context of highly emotional imagery. The lecture concludes with an invitation to a weekend training session at Booneville.

We are going to explode up to Booneville to actualize our fullest human potential. We have come to realize that people can experience joy, stimulation, and full value in a harmonious environment.

Throughout the evening the guest is encouraged to go to Booneville. The slide show depicts people working and playing together in a pastoral setting. A final appeal to attend the training session is made by the moderator to guests.

If you liked what was said here tonight, your question is, "How does it apply to me?" Whatever your perspective on the world--economic, political or religious--we can work out the problems together! You wonder how come everyone is filled with joy? Well, we are facing these problems in the world. Here is your opportunity to be a pioneer and help us build an ideal world.



Members attempt to make life in the Family as rewarding as possible. By manipulating all interaction, members seek to move their guests from a "wait and see" attitude to one of trust and receptiveness. The evening's events are organized to promote the guest's complete participation. Members realize that if their guests are involved and enjoying themselves, they are more likely to come to Booneville. A young woman who attended a Unification Church dinner and eventually a weekend at Booneville had this impression of the evening.

Amy urged me to come back and to attend a weekend. I came away quite unsure what I thought of it all. I really liked some of the people. Everyone certainly looked healthy and happy. I wondered what they had that produced such energy and exuberance.

People attending a Unification Church dinner often leave perplexed and unsure about attending the training session. During the course of my study those who went to Booneville seemed to be most attracted to the intense personal attention they received, as well as to the opportunity to spend a weekend with a group of people who promised ". . . the greatest weekend of your life."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Nearly all who decide to go to the training session are in their early twenties. Most are white, middle class, and have attended college. Since the study did not include extensive interviews, only tentative impressions about recruits' backgrounds can be made. My prevailing impression about the dozens of individuals I observed undergoing indoctrination was that they had no binding ties. Many were recent arrivals to the Bay Area and were either looking for work, a connection to a communal group, or "just something to happen." A number of others lived in the Bay Area and

### The Choreography of Total Participation

Each Friday evening an equal number of members and guests travel by bus to the church's farm near Booneville, 150 miles north of San Francisco. During the ride, members convey a sense of anticipation to their guests about the joy and harmony they will experience at the farm. They sustain this mood by constantly singing, cheering, and chanting. The training session has a pre-established pattern of action deliberately structured to enhance recruitment. Members know beforehand the character and tempo of all formal activity and play their roles precisely. They consistently adhere to Neil Solonen's instructions.

You must regard all other training sessions as past . . . they didn't make us perfect and didn't bring everyone in. We must really pray to learn better ways, to be effective and inspiring. . . . We should prepare earlier in the week, arrive at the site ahead of time and welcome the guests as we would to our homes. Everything should have the feeling that you have prepared it for them.<sup>4</sup>

The weekend officially begins on Saturday morning. Guests are roused from bed early with music ("Wake up, wake up, you sleepy head . . ."). They are hustled through a series of pre-planned activities.<sup>5</sup> Singing, group

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expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs or with whatever they were involved. The most consistent commonality was an openness to personal change.

<sup>4</sup> Solonen, Memo.

<sup>5</sup> A typical day's schedule follows:  
 7:30 a.m. Wake up  
 7:50 a.m. Exercise and singing  
 8:30 a.m. Group meeting and breakfast

discussions, lectures, and recreation alternate in rapid sequence. As soon as one activity concludes, participants are hurried to the next. Recalling his first trip to Booneville, a former member reported:

The weekend with its many lectures and group activities seemed to rush forward. I felt as though I were being pushed forward against my will. But the activity was so intense and incessant I had no time to think about it. The only time I had for myself was during sleep.<sup>6</sup>

The atmosphere at Booneville reminded the observer of a Hollywood musical (one former member told reporters he felt like he was on stage in "West Side Story").<sup>7</sup> The scenes and events are choreographed to convey specific meanings and impressions, as well as create an aura of excitement. The dramatic production is efficient and effective because

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9:30 a.m.	Walk
10:15 a.m.	Song practice
10:45 a.m.	Lecture
12:00 p.m.	Group meeting--lunch with group
1:00 p.m.	Dodgeball
2:15 p.m.	Private conversation with respective buddy
2:30 p.m.	Lecture
4:00 p.m.	Group meeting
4:45 p.m.	Lecture
5:30 p.m.	Short break with groups
5:45 p.m.	Resumption of lecture
6:45 p.m.	Dinner with group and . . .
7:45 p.m.	Preparation for skits
8:00 p.m.	Entertainment and personal testimonies
10:00 p.m.	Group meeting
11:00 p.m.	Bed

<sup>6</sup>Andrew Ross, Private notes and personal communications, 1975-1976.

<sup>7</sup>Carol Stoner and JoAnne Parke, All God's Children (Radnor, Pennsylvania: Chilton, 1977).

members are cooperative, disciplined, and always in total consensus. Cheers and applause follow every song, announcement, lecture, and group activity. These acclamations are routine from week to week. Thus, members know exactly how and when to enthusiastically respond for maximum effect.

The theatrical environment especially lends a dynamic quality to the lectures. Rather than beginning the speech immediately after everyone gathers in the Chicken Palace, resounding songs are sung to establish the "proper mood." An impressive, well-practiced band accompanies the singing. Members often stand on their chairs and prod prospects to imitate their exuberant gestures. The atmosphere is emotionally charged and evangelistic during these moments. The Chicken Palace echoes with jubilant voices and well-practiced instruments. The guests do not ponder over reflective questions like why a particular song was selected; rather, they expect another song and appear anxious to resume singing.

Songs are a dynamic connective mechanism since they precede and follow all group gatherings. The lyrics often suggest the virtues and rewards of being part of the Family.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>"Pass It On": "I wish for you my friend this happiness I've found / You can depend on Him, it matters not where you're bound / I'll shout it from the mountaintop / I want my world to know / The Lord of Love has come to me, I want to pass it on."

Song themes are selected carefully to match the content of lectures. For example, one of the several selections just prior to Dr. Durst's first Saturday lecture ("The Creation") is "What Is Your Reason." The lyrics include:

What is your reason for being created?  
 What is your purpose boy; why are you here?  
 Don't you know the whole world is waiting  
 For you to come of age this year?

Just as the applause following the last pre-lecture song fades, Durst is given a thorough introduction. He gracefully appears on stage amidst members' (and nearly all guests') renewed cheers and applause; thus, the excitement and dramatic mood do not diminish. To this point the audience has been prompted to respect Durst's presence and be highly receptive towards whatever he happens to say. One former participant told me,

His eloquence was remarkable and his logic was all the more impressive. . . . As he finished everyone began jumping up, cheering and applauding ecstatically, and Dr. Durst casually walked offstage with a cute grin. Dr. Durst was always walking off stage. There were no question-and-answer periods after his lectures. Instead, there were exuberant songs before he spoke and earthshaking cheers afterwards.

The guest's attention is absorbed by the incessant round of activity. Often he is mystified by the entire production. His inhibition and awe toward the intense nature of the training session allow the routine character of the performance to be obscured. Moreover, idealized impressions can be created. Because there is such "joy" and "stimulation" in being part of Booneville's festive scene,

it is taken for granted that everyone will merge easily into the collective. In this setting it is impossible to remain on the fringe of action as a passive observer. The question facing the guest is how to respond, how to act. With rare exceptions, prospective members are anxious to conform.

Newcomers are given ample social cues to cope with the continual events and members' passion for unanimity. They are told one must "participate one hundred percent" to get the most out of the training session. "No one can do anything alone. Everyone has to participate one hundred percent for the whole or the songs, feeling, everything wouldn't be as great as they are."

### Groups

Small groups are the focal point of training-session activity. They are formed early in the training session to facilitate prospective members' total involvement. Each group has about ten people--an equal number of members and guests. Neil Solonen specifies the importance of the group leader.

Group leaders should feel an over-all responsibility to see that the training session goes well. The groups will be formed sometime during the morning. At first you have to be gentle--they're not in obedience training. You have to win them, especially at first.<sup>9</sup>

Immediately after assignments are made, the group

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<sup>9</sup>Solonen, Memo.

leaders gather their groups together and extend an enthusiastic welcome. To develop group cohesiveness, everyone is asked to introduce himself. "It's like we are going to be married for the next thirty-six hours," participants are told. The leader calls on everyone to do the choo-choo chant song and cheer for the sake of unity. These activities become a ritual part of every group gathering.

The group leader also dictates the course and content of all group meetings. He chooses the topics for discussion and selects songs that coincide with lecture themes.

Church members are expected to cooperate fully with the group leader. Neil Solonen is very clear about the working relationship between members and their leaders:

All Family members are to think of themselves as assistant group leaders; they should respond perfectly to what they are asked to do, no more, no less. The group leader should have perfect control, not approximate control.<sup>10</sup>

As assistant group leaders, members' primary concern is to express through informal testimonies how their lives have been transformed since they met the Family. The leader knows before each group meeting what inspirations and ideas fellow members will share with new people. Occasionally, prior to meetings, the leader coaches members on what they should specifically say to the group.

When the group leader asks members to share with new

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

people how they met the Family, the member provides a thoughtful account that usually parallels the circumstances that brought new people to Booneville. Most often they also were approached by a cheerful church member at a time, viewed in retrospect, that was propitious. A new member expressed her introduction to the Family this way.

I have been to charismatic meetings before, but they are not close to the good feeling and love that are here at Booneville. I was feeling bad because I had quit my job and was asking myself why. I was riding home on the bus when Nancy walked up to me. I wanted to say, "Oh, go away!" but if I did that I would be the worst person in the world. I could tell by her eyes that all she wanted to do was talk.

The assistant group leaders' inspirations are usually extended in utmost sincerity, yet many are somewhat contrived.<sup>11</sup> Nearly all conclude on a note of hope and enthusiasm: "All my dreams have been realized. I see no reason to ever leave here." A young woman who attended the training session but did not remain had this reflection:

People would tell their stories of before they'd joined, mostly of having been a long-haired hippie, atheistic or spiritually trippy, who was living a self-indulgent life with drugs and sex, and was really deep-down unhappy. Then he'd found the Family and been transformed into a joyous, virtuous child of Heavenly Father. Everyone works very hard, and this is seen as an

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<sup>11</sup>During my four months of observation, I listened to many members, more than once, share their accounts of becoming members. Their stories were often too inconsistent, contradictory, or varied to have been accurate representations of their experiences.



inevitable product of such a transformation--giving all you've got in loving service.<sup>12</sup>

The thrust of the narratives is to evoke similar responses among the new people. Nearly all guests are empathetic and share eventually with their new friends their innermost thoughts and feelings, for which they receive support and praise from the group. Neil Solonen notes the crucial importance of groups in promoting participation:

It is there that people experience such a closeness that they have to explain themselves. People should want to do everything with their group, because it makes possible a deeper and richer experience. Commitment and communication are so deep that people must reveal themselves. . . . When the group is intensely involved and committed, the group pressure of the best kind inspires students to be involved. We have to build to a big pressure for a heavy decision by the end of the weekend.<sup>13</sup>

As the newcomer "explains" himself before the group, his involvement takes on a meaning beyond mere compliance to cheer, chant, and sing. Hearing himself describe his life releases inhibitions and enhances his own willingness to be involved. As Fred said (p. 42), he realized he should not live alone in the woods but join a community like Creative Community Project.

As a new member, a young lady reflected on her transition into the Family: "I think back and remember my

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<sup>12</sup>World Christian Liberation Front, a distributed mimeographed circular of W.C.L.F. members observations while taking part in the Unification Church recruitment process at Booneville and Berkeley, California, 1975.

<sup>13</sup>Solonen, memo.

first week. I didn't say anything or nearly nothing; but after awhile you really open up!" Church members refer to the moment when the newcomer opens himself up before the group as "blossoming."

Within the group, each guest is paired with a member, who is his constant companion through the duration of the workshop. The member's task is to ensure his "buddy's" total involvement in all activity. The buddy system augments assurance that Booneville's collective processional continues on cue. A member holds his buddy's hand during group discussions and while moving from place to place, even to the bathroom. A relatively new member told his buddy he had received directions from an experienced colleague. "Renee is training me. I am not supposed to leave you for anything." A leader related to her group an incident that typifies how members tenaciously maintain this constant vigil:

When I was in the Family only a short while, a girl came to the training session who just didn't want to participate. She hated the songs and even put her hand over her ears. She would sit down by the creek and smoke cigarettes. When I came to be with her she would say "go away." I would go back to Onni and say, "What should I do?" Onni would tell me, "Go back to her. Show that you love her." I would go back, but she would either not talk to me or go somewhere else. I would follow her. . . . By the end of the weekend she said something very moving. She said no matter how badly she treated me I was always there with that unconditional love.

Loving

"Always there with that unconditional love" for the prospective member is called the "love bomb." Members casually refer to the love bomb to characterize their cultivation of affective ties with guests. Throughout the weekend, guests are extended gestures of love, not only from their respective buddies, but also from the entire Family. Individuals who attend the training session are nearly always impressed by the intense care and affection they receive. The following reflection is typical of many.

It certainly felt wonderful to be served, given such attention, and made to feel important. In a matter of days, virtual strangers, by pleading and persistence, and proclamations of love, had succeeded in eliciting my love and trust in return.<sup>14</sup>

Owing to group activities and the jubilant atmosphere of the Chicken Palace, newcomers constantly are in touch with members' warmth and enthusiasm. To love and be loved in return is offered as an image-basis of an ideal community, as well as a means for one to realize his maximum creative potential. Maria keynotes the training session by weaving visionary imagery around the themes of self-transcendence and love. "The purpose of the weekend is to fall in love, she says, "you make yourself happy in the moment by freely contributing. Imagine everyone doing that, everybody smiling." Dr. Durst also continually refers to the

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<sup>14</sup>World Christian Liberation Front, Account.

importance of love as a way of knowing God and realizing the value of human life (see p. 43).

The aura of loving often prompts newcomers to declare very positive approval for the kindness shared among everyone. "People really do love each other here, and there isn't anywhere else like it. And I love everyone here! And I've never felt this way before." Other individuals respond with feelings of uncertainty towards the manner in which members project their exuberance and attentiveness. Below is one person's views after returning from the training session. Her account is a useful description of the dilemma prospects experience when they do not endorse totally the mutual affection at Booneville.

The emphasis on the closeness of the Family and on unconditional love is very appealing to people with those needs--as are all the pats and hugs and smiles. I'm particularly aware of the way in which this was used whenever I would raise a theological question. The leaders of my group would look very impressed and pleased, seem to agree with me, and then give me a large dose of love--and perhaps say something about unity and God's love being most important. I would have an odd, disjointed sort of feeling--not knowing if I'd really been heard or not, yet aware of the attentive look and the smiling approval. My intellectual objection was undercut by means of emotional seduction. Unfortunately, I succumbed to this many times without knowing what was happening.

Being encouraged to "give all you have" speaks to the needs for belonging and for usefulness--and to the guilt we feel when we waste the gifts that God has given us. When I did hold back in some small way, and received a look of sorrowful, benevolent concern, I felt guilt and the desire to please--as though it were God Himself whom I had offended. What may really have been wisdom on my part (trying to preserve my own ego boundaries in a

dangerous and potentially overwhelming situation) was treated as symptomatic of alienation and fear; and a withholding of God's light.<sup>15</sup>

It is difficult for a guest to maintain reservations about a community that defines itself as actualizing unconditional love. Members are careful not to show disagreement among themselves but rather support one another when new people express themselves in ways that are not consistent with group consensus. Expressions that contradict the definition of the situation are not countered by a direct argument. Rather, a member gently but emphatically says he also was once "skeptical" but soon realized his contrary opinions were unfounded. One former prospective member said:

I expressed my doubts to my group--my damning this place because it was so seductively playing on my past ideals. They applauded my sincerity and gave me support. Others told me how skeptical and doubtful they were when they first arrived. Annie told me, "I was cynical for a whole week. I had just finished a course on 'propaganda and persuasion' so I was extremely leery of what was happening, but then I began to see that these people were speaking and doing from the heart. I saw that it was honest and sincere."

Like Annie, individuals often abandon their initial cynicism when neither members or other prospective members offer support for their negative feelings and opinions. Instead, their doubts and skepticism are neutralized consistently by smiles, embraces, and other forms of reassurance. To reciprocate this show of affection is the obvious sign of

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

a "natural person." Hence, the message is only implied yet quite clear to the prospective recruit: If one aspires to be a loving person, certainly there is no better place or opportunity than with the Family. Cynicism or negativity is an impediment to the realization of full human potential. Whether pretense or real, the love bomb at Booneville is accepted readily by nearly all newcomers. They are encouraged by members to return this affection. The emotional high of giving and receiving support, hugging and being hugged, and other mutual exchanges is a formidable feature of recruitment.

As the weekend progresses, momentum builds as songs and games continue to alternate with lectures and group discussions. Members gauge newcomers' reactions to this stream of events, scrutinizing continuously their responses to each situation to measure the extent of their participation. They appraise carefully prospective members' receptiveness to lectures. If one does not seem to be giving full effort during songs, a member gives him a slight nudge and a broad smile while singing and clapping loudly to demonstrate the happiness of taking part. As noted, members always endorse every procedure with cheers and applause. Newcomers also obligingly find themselves jumping up to clap and cheer. One person told me just after his first weekend:

The whole thing is habitual. I found myself clapping and cheering and I didn't even know why. You don't discriminate what you are clapping about, but just end up doing it for everything.

New people usually do not construe this pressure to respond to constant stimuli as threatening, since close relationships are developing between them and members. The gentle prodding to conform and participate generally is perceived by new people as a consequence of members' exuberance, love, and best intentions. They are enthralled by members' generous attention and reciprocate by taking an active part in all events. Gradually, a subtle maternal-like relationship develops between members and their guests. An implicit rule is: Follow directions and you will have a very enjoyable weekend. Those who step out of line are admonished by reminders that they are not fully cooperating. For example, one participant was slightly uncooperative within his group, yet not overtly outspoken or negative. He was confused and asked the training-session director, "Aren't you using mind control here"? After conferring with the director, his group leader told the newcomer that he had to leave. He was escorted immediately from the training session to a bus stop. His group leader told him she regretted his leaving, but obviously he was not ready to hear the truth with a pure heart and open mind. His skepticism could influence adversely the spiritual growth of other new people.

A former training-session participant commented on the fact that a guest's response to caring gestures must be one of compliance.

The whole weekend had the quality of a cheer--like one long rousing camp song. What guests were expected and subtly persuaded to do was participate completely. That was stressed over and over: "Give your whole self and you'll get a lot back; the only way for this to be the most wonderful experience of your whole life is if you really put everything you have into it." My buddy sat with me during all the lectures and would look at me frequently--always with a loving smile, with a silent message like "Isn't the lecture great?" or "Let's really clap and sing loud."<sup>16</sup>

Members' continual attentiveness towards their prospects may appear to be spontaneous and arise out of natural circumstances. On the contrary, this attitude is programmed and employed conscientiously. One group leader said to her group:

You know, you must think we are crazy, rushing about doing things for people and helping them however we can. The staff actually competes to see who can sacrifice the most. This is the way to bring us the most joy.

A workshop participant had this insight into the intentionality of members' interactions with prospective members.

On Sunday morning, when I woke really early, I walked by the building where some of the Family members had slept. They were up and apparently having a meeting. I heard a cheer: "Gonna meet all their needs; gonna meet all their needs; gonna meet all their needs." And that did seem to be what they tried to do. Whatever I wanted--except privacy or any deviation from the schedule--would be gotten for me immediately and with great concern. I was continually smiled at, hugged, patted, and made to feel very special and very much wanted.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>World Christian Liberation Front, Account.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



Control of Communication

Successful recruitment is contingent on members' ability to control communication within the workshop setting. They attempt intentionally to establish dominion over whatever potential members hear, see, and experience. The regulation of all personal interaction between non-members hinges on the achievement of their total participation. Consequently, the scene can be maintained to members' satisfaction when prospects are engaged actively in prescribed events, i.e., lectures, songs, and discussions.

When hustled through these activities from daybreak to midnight, newcomers have little opportunity to share ideas and opinions with one another. Members develop "perfect control"<sup>18</sup> through the intense involvement of all workshop participants. Although control can never be perfect, it does result in the enforcement of an interpretation of events consistent with their objectives.

Alternative interpretations can be generated only if prospects have the opportunity to evaluate their experiences somewhat discreetly. But members consistently keep prospective members separated; thus, in those brief moments when they could exchange reflective opinions they are not allowed to do so. One participant said after leaving the training session:

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<sup>18</sup>Solonen, Memo.

During one song I noticed a new person sitting by himself next to the stove. Before long two older members took him outside. Immediately after the singing I left the group to find him and ask him what happened. Fortunately, he was alone.

"They told me since I'm here I should do what they say or I won't gain the full experience of the weekend," he told me. No more than two minutes elapsed before two members of his group and two from mine approached us and informed us that we should go back to our respective groups.

"Can't I talk with him alone?" I demanded.

"We're not supposed to have small groups talking together," a member said straight to my face, showing no emotion.

By limiting privacy, members effectively can sustain the appearance of harmonious unity. "Everyone just naturally wants to always be together," guests are told. While most newcomers accept this rationale, one former participant offered this critical analysis:

The cheers, singing, dancing, and physical exercise are all effective ways to bring people into a group and to break down their defenses. Music, in particular, opens the subconscious and creates a bond between those who sing and clap together. The lack of any privacy means that one can never get away from the group pressure, never stand back and look at what's really going on and how one really feels about it.

Besides pressures to cooperate with group life, no one is allowed to express questions, concerns, or opinions that threaten members' continually reified definition of the situation. A former guest's comments on his weekend at Ideal City illustrate this point.

Dr. Durst was always walking off the stage. There were no question-and-answer periods after his lectures. Instead, there were exuberant songs before he spoke and earthshaking cheering afterwards. On one occasion, when I subtly left my group, I asked him why he didn't have question-and-answer periods following his lectures.

"That's what the groups are for," he answered.

"You mean that you're willing to have my group leader answer my questions that are directed to you?"

"Yes."

Noticing my look of confusion, he added, "If they can't answer your questions, you can always see me afterwards."

Well, there was no way I could see anybody "afterwards" because there was no afterwards--something always followed immediately.

Church members view control as a just and necessary policy, one that need not be kept secret. Prospects at the training session are told:

We have a few rules here. They are really good rules. First, new people are not to talk with each other. It is best to talk with someone who has been around longer and had the same experiences you are having. That way, all the talk is elevated. Likewise for people who have been here for only a week; talk only with people older than you.

A newcomer asked the training-session director why this rule of silence was enforced. The director replied:

When they get together, if there is the slightest bit of negativity, then they will only magnify the negativity, and see the bad side. Negativity expressed to new people holds them back while they are here.

Leaders deliberately guide their group discussions towards absolute accord with the themes and rhetoric presented at the training session. Exclusion of viewpoints they term "negative" and "skeptical" is essential to preserve their definition of the training session's meaning.

#### Making a Positive Evaluation

At the close of weekend training sessions, group leaders routinely ask their guests to describe formally the feelings, ideas, and insights they have gathered over the

past two days. A group leader told her group:

All of you write down on this paper we are passing around what new determination you have gotten from being here this weekend, then tell us. Something you can take with you.

Members' "evaluations" typically are resolute, emphatic offerings of how they have become or will become better individuals. But on one occasion, a new person did not say anything for a moment when it came his turn to speak. He appeared reserved and troubled by his predicament.

"I'm afraid I would have to say something negative as well as positive," he said. The leader explained directly to him, while glancing at others in the circle: "The rule of the last meeting is you can say only positive things. You have to have a determination you can take with you."

The new person responded, "I'm sorry you said that; I think I should pass." Tears flowed down his cheeks. No one spoke. Everyone looked toward the leader. She silently pondered what to do. Rather than call on someone else she said to him, "The reason we only say positive things is so you can leave us with hope. Is there anything you could say that would leave us with hope?" He replied, "In that case, all I can do is express gratitude for all the feeling and kindness that was given to me."

A group member must support group consensus or risk embarrassment. Because the content of group discussions is controlled, the guest is placed in a position of having to assume a positive attitude.

Most participants immerse themselves eagerly in Ideal City's exhilarating activity. They are either genuinely attracted to the fun and excitement or, in some cases, feign enthusiasm as a means of coping with members' passionate unanimity and insistence that everyone participate in the carefully choreographed production. The constant flow of ritualized cheers, chants, singing, and applause envelopes all participants. Initially reticent newcomers find themselves acquiescing to the joy of taking part.

Since Booneville is more than one hundred miles from the Bay Area, members are able to produce an ongoing recruitment process without distractions or interference that could divert the attention of prospective members. Communication and action continually are dominated by the rapid sequence of songs, lectures, discussions, and other group activity. After leaving a training session, a young woman told me, "In the space of two days and nights there was not more than a minute for me to reflect alone."

Because they are deprived the combination of external information and inner reflection, newcomers' capacity to make critical judgments frequently is hampered. Of course, the guests are not strictly victims of members' manipulative recruitment practices. Recruitment into the church is a transaction between a prospect's susceptibilities and the movement's appeal. The drama and pleasures of Booneville are contrived to generate commitment and structured to enhance

the guest's desire to remain with the excitement of being among "inspired" people. Taking part in the recruitment process creates excitement, which serves as a catalyst for what members refer to as "the final push for commitment." At the end of the weekend, members make a concerted eleventh-hour appeal to entice their prospects to remain for a week-long training session. While immersed in an isolated environment intentionally structured to narrow their perspective and perception, prospects must make the "heavy decision" segregated from the outside world.

#### "We Can Be New People"

Lectures also are a crucial aspect of the total recruitment effort. Participants spend one-third of each day listening to lecture rhetoric, which is the focal point for the near-hysterical enthusiasm orchestrated each time everyone gathers in the Chicken Palace. Durst's lectures barely resemble the Divine Principle. There is no mention of Reverend Moon. Many theological and historical aspects of church beliefs are excluded from weekend training-session lectures. Although Durst says we are in a crucial phase of history, no millennial predictions are made. The imminent arrival of the Lord of the Second Advent only is implied. Instead, the lectures are personalized to appeal to the needs and ambitions of the audience. Durst selects language to fit the majority of his audience's intellectual maturity. He extensively uses thought-provoking imagery, clichés,

analogies, and anecdotes to arouse the enthusiasm of members and prospective members. Countless phrases such as "maximum creative potential," "understanding and actualizing the truth," "conscientious common sense," and "setting a high standard" constantly are integrated into lectures and group discussion and thereby become an established part of Booneville jargon. Brief, highly reductive, definitive-sounding phrases easily are memorized and expressed. Members incorporate these maxims into all levels of talk: group discussions, recreation breaks, and casual conversation. Eventually, this language becomes constricting, since it dominates what the prospect hears at Booneville.

The prospect is exposed to a continued array of ideology, visionary imagery, and idealistic goals. While immersed in the flow of events and given constant care, he is confronted with the lucrative opportunities offered by the Family. As the weekend progresses, the lectures become more suggestive; not only is being a pioneer an opportunity, it is a moral responsibility.

On Saturdays, the lectures, group discussions, and testimonies focus on individual self-fulfillment and transformation. A theme is expressed repeatedly: "One's unique ability for the happiness of all. You make your life significant in the moment by freely contributing. You pour yourself out" (Maria's introductory lecture, p. 40).

Durst expresses the theme in a similar fashion in his

opening remarks:

We find whenever we contribute our unique value and ability for the happiness of all, centered on the conscience, we realize our individual value and our collective value--our spiritual as well as our physical fulfillment.

As the day progresses, the theme becomes more explicit. One becomes a "natural person" and realizes his highest potential by contributing himself to a collective effort, to help build the "Ideal World." Durst's final Saturday lecture concludes:

The great hope is that we can be new people. The hope of becoming individual and collective spiritual beings if we can bind together to end the sorrow, crimes, and mistakes of the past.

Perhaps the most stimulating phase of all idealistic imagery Durst shares with the audience is when he asks why God has bothered to create the universe. "What have human beings sought throughout history?" "Joy!" members shout, cheering and applauding. Durst continues:

If human beings act in a lawful, beautiful and loving way, God feels stimulation; God feels joy. With all these things reflecting His own image then His joy is all-expanding and infinite. If everything we do is a reflection of God's ideal, then God enlarges continually. If everything we do is a reflection of true human life, then everything we do in a relationship to each other is an enlargement of the other. Just imagine, even in creating a good, constructive, healthy, and loving environment, there is tremendous joy, tremendous satisfaction. It is always enlarging; no one is ever diminished.

The Creative Community Project's vision of the cosmos is a world with infinite potential for love and creativity. Humanity expands spiritually as it personifies God's ideals.



As individuals grow, God grows:

We can see the necessity to grow beyond a point of egocentered value back to understanding truth from a comprehensive point of view. We have to take God's universal point of view. What's the ultimate humility? It is to see things as God sees them, and to recognize value from this point of view. So in this way, if we are motivated by that universal law, by that universal love, we are not just Americans, we are not just the Kowalski family, we are not just of this time, of this place, but we are of all times and all places. We become universal human beings, then God can work through us. We become the embodiment of God's value. The man and the woman who are mature are the embodiment of God's nature. We can be as God. All we have to do is to realize our Godlike nature. The responsibility lies upon each and every one of us. We can close and diminish ourselves or we can open ourselves and feel our full value. All we have to do is to understand, to feel, and to act from the largest point of view. We can then have everything.

Lecture Reinforcement: Groups,  
Testimonies, and Songs

Durst's conclusion, "The responsibility lies in each and every one of us," leads into the following day's effort to challenge the prospect's conscience. Early Sunday morning, leaders announce to their respective groups:

The theme for the day is: "What is our portion of responsibility?" Think about what you can do to make the world a better place. . . . The next lecture is about Jesus and His life. The people in His times and how they responded to His coming, the truths He brought to the earth and how they were rejected. I want you all to listen and think of how you would respond in today's torn world.

As in the above instance, group leaders often prompt newcomers regarding the upcoming lecture. They remind their prospects to listen carefully and say, "Think about what Dr. Durst is saying and how it applies to your life."

Besides encouraging prospects to have a serious attitude towards the lectures, group leaders monitor their responses. Immediately after the lecture they ask if there are any questions. Or, "Is there anything Dr. Durst said that was inspiring?" Family members do not hesitate to bring a prospect's latent doubt or confusion to the surface: "Do you have any questions? From my own experience I can say it's best to get them out in the open before they can fester and grow. Usually a little clarification makes everything clear."

Thinking of themselves as "assistant group leaders" (p. 70), members routinely include in the discussions instances of how their "skepticism" was alleviated soon after they entered the Family. "I had the same doubts many of you may be having," members often say to prospects. One person, two months after joining the Family, said to his buddy:

I really opened my heart to know the truth. I was slow in making up my mind and I didn't get into the swing of things. I was negative, but I was with people who I could relate to who were believing and I couldn't understand why they were. I prayed, really sincerely, and after a while I couldn't see why I was so worried or had the questions that I did.

Members share with their respective groups and buddies how the Principles are valuable to their lives. "The Principles are important because they tell us how, when, and why," the groups are told. Recruits often hear how following the Principles will enable them to realize the Truth. One

member gave this typical inspirational statement after his first week as a member.

When I first came here, I thought I would listen and incorporate what kernels of truth were here into my own personal philosophy. As the week went by, I realized how unnecessary that was. The Truth is already here! All I have to do is recognize it.

For the benefit of prospective members, group leaders ask new members to share their commitment experiences.

"Tell me about your experience during the week-long training session."

"Well, when I first came [to Booneville] I didn't believe in God. But I realized my old concepts were not holding that well, like evolution. I decided to see if the Principle worked by throwing out my concepts. I still didn't believe in God after the weekend and almost went home. I thought everything they said made sense, but why bring God into it?"

"What made you stay?"

"Well, Jeremiah [his buddy] must have really chanted and prayed hard because I got spiritually zapped. I decided to stay for the week and tried to pick the Principle apart, but I couldn't. It was really frustrating. I decided to see how it applied by actualizing it. I began to see how it really worked. If I ever have an experience where it doesn't apply, I will stop believing in it. You will never get it until you actualize it."

### Dreams and Destiny

In addition to promoting the Principle and its innumerable themes such as "taking responsibility" and "working for the common good," group leaders and members inject into the group discussions other topics designed to make life in the Family seem even more compelling. Group leaders tell new people that they were predestined to come to Booneville. One said:

Think hard, back to the events in your life--even way back--to see if there were things that happened that had something to do with your being here. See if there isn't some force that led you to this place. Remember your ancestors; if you had righteous ones, they are probably encouraging you now.

During the last group meeting on Saturday night, just before guests are escorted to bed, the leaders tell their groups to remember their dreams. They are told dreams are important because God may be guiding or helping them to make the right decisions. The following morning, leaders ask the groups who remembered their dreams. Very few do. For those who can, the group leader applies a positive dream interpretation, which implies that being in the Family is a righteous path. An older member usually offers a dream conducive to this type of interpretation. A member of the Family for six months shared a dream that reinforced his decision to remain with the Family. Before having his dream, he had been vacillating between leaving and staying:

When I did decide to stay, that night I had a dream that applied directly to all that I had experienced. It was very clear and whenever I have doubts I can fall back on that dream. It's amazing to look back on the last twelve months and see how these events [ones that applied to the dream] led to my meeting the Family; how I could become a decent person and see how my life was set in a positive direction. I encourage you all to stay.

Imparting provocative notions such as righteous ancestors and dream revelations is a routine part of members' (particularly group leaders') interpersonal strategy to convince prospects to remain in Booneville. These ploys

are consistent with Neil Solonen's instructions: "Find something they will respond to, that excites them. Get a hook into them. . ." (p. 62).

### Testimonies and Skits

Formal testimonies also reinforce points emphasized in lectures. Older members share emotional stories that include the details of their conversions. Although the idealistic imagery integrated into lectures and group discussions corresponds to the ambitions and needs of all training-session participants, it does not approach the emotional impact of formal testimonies offered by experienced members. Each afternoon and evening around a glowing campfire, at least two members express freely their experiences of personal renewal. In their own words, they describe how they became members of the Family. When giving their testimonies, members display a sense of assurance and depth of faith that newcomers can find admirable. Maria is especially adept at weaving her story around prevailing themes. She followed her opening lecture on "falling in love" with a very sincere testimony on how God, personified as a tree, modestly revealed His love for her. Her account, profound and exquisite in imagery, brought participants to tears. Presenting the same story a few weeks later yielded a similar effect.

Testimonies are designed to support emotional- and cognitive-level themes--topics that members want the prospect

to bear in mind as he chooses to leave or remain at Booneville. Such themes continually are kept in the forefront. "Personal responsibility" is one slogan integrated into testimonies. It coincides with Durst's final lecture, "What Is Man's Portion of Responsibility?" After that lecture, Gloria announces to the gathered workshop that her talk is about responsibility. She tells everyone that she worked for a community-development program in Philadelphia:

While I was there, I was always running away from responsibility. It didn't bother me. I didn't care about the people. I was always that way; I never wanted to take responsibility. I finished college, came here, and met the Family. As I began to grow, I began to have responsibility.

Testimonies given by Gloria, Maria, and other seasoned members generate admiration from members and non-members. They return to their groups and share the reasons why they were "inspired" by the previous testimony.

Saturday-evening skits also are a vehicle for transmitting meaningful themes. Skits include slogans chosen for their emotional quality: "finding truth and happiness," "coming home" to the Family, and "staying with Father for eternity." Prior to the skits, groups meet individually to prepare their routines. Words of well-known songs are altered. The new words, sung and pantomimed to the old melodies, extol the joys and virtues of being in the Family. Actualizing, perfection, being a heavenly child, and other ideals are projected skillfully to the audience. Every song

has a special message.

In addition to being lyrical exhortations to join the Family, the skits often refer to specific beliefs and the historical imminence of the Ideal World. The following song was sung to the tune of Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues":

The kingdom is coming, it's rolling 'round the bend.  
We ain't seen our Father since we don't know when,  
But we're going to see him soon, Lord.  
Just you wait and see.  
Gonna bring in His kingdom; Father be proud of me.

We've been living in Darkness for six thousand years,  
Brought our Father sadness, suffering and tears.  
But we're gonna make him smile,  
Gonna bring Him His children down home Family style.

We're all bound for glory, won't you hop on board  
this train?  
(Choo-choo pow!)  
We don't carry no sinners; perfection is our aim.  
Each day is growing brighter, now we can rejoice!  
Oh children's ears are open, won't you listen to his voice?

By composing and performing these skits, members and non-members are brought closer together. This sustained esprit de corps amplifies the themes and messages integrated into the songs. Also, workshop newcomers find themselves in a position of gleefully encouraging other newcomers to join the Family by acting out their assigned roles when their respective groups perform. The skits reveal the irony of the training session. In addition to members being active promoters of membership, new people fulfill role expectations that include inadvertent proselytizing of each other during the songs, discussions, and other group activities.

### The Restoration of Value

Besides complementing the moral tenets projected through skits and other group activities, Dr. Durst's lectures have a consciousness-raising content similar in style to propaganda utilized by other social movements. He offers a vague formula for what must be done to build a utopian world, including the goals and specific changes the movement needs to implement. In his "Purpose of Mankind" lecture he says:

The purpose of mankind is to re-educate ourselves by the truth and contribute to the actual establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven. . . . To change we act off of a new base, centered on God. Then God's ideal is brought to earth as a reality on earth. To act off of a new base, we have to be aware of the conditions necessary to restore value.

Durst then places on an easel a large placard that reads:

#### Movement Towards Restoration of Value Conditions of Reformation:

1. Truth
2. Good leader and co-workers
3. Concrete plan and practical wisdom
4. Chance and timing
5. Using earthly advantage

Durst points to each item on the list as he explains how these "conditions of reformation" are possible. Beginning with "Truth" he says, "We have to know what is necessary to restore full value. We need a guiding ideology." Next, he refers to the second point, "Good leader":

Many people are looking for the Avatar to arrive, a person who speaks a universal truth. If such a person comes who embodies that central truth for this age, it is very necessary to bind with that person.

Durst does not offer any hints about who the Avatar might be



as he moves to the third point: "We need concrete means to make it [the restoration] a reality. We need to know how to go out into the muck of the world and deal with negativity." In reference to "Chance and timing," he declares:

When it is necessary for you to respond, when the time is right, you must know how to respond. We have the same responsibility of 2,000 years ago. If we fail to recognize a new figure who has come, the suffering will be enormous.

Durst addresses the fifth topic, then concludes:

Using earthly advantage is knowing how to use media and technology at the right moment to accomplish our purpose. This is an age where many, many things are coming together. The choice is to work together to build an Ideal World or suffer. Either we make a new history or we repeat history. All we have to do is accept responsibility.

It may appear simplistic, hollow, and full of meaningless jargon, yet this lecture, as well as the others, sounds impressive. The tandem effect of Durst's eloquence and the affirmative cheers of the audience, in consensus, instills the feeling among the participants that the Heavenly Kingdom actually is at hand. It is merely a matter of embracing or rejecting Durst's moral imperatives. His rigid dualities offer a narrow choice: Be "tough" for goodness and truth or be "loose" for evil. One repeats the mistakes of the past and is faithless to the vision if he does not share in the responsibility of building an Ideal World.

None of the lectures includes a direct plea to join the Family, but the message is solid. Participants continually

are reminded of personal rewards to be bestowed on all pioneers and a collective salvation for those who are predestined to respond.

Again, Durst makes oblique reference to Reverend Moon when mentioning God's "chosen one," the one who embodies His standard through "law and principle." The occasional reference to the possibility of another avatar helps prepare prospects for the revelation made during the week-long workshop, when it is disclosed that history's central figure walks the earth. The Family follows a new messiah, the perfect parent and master.

#### "We Want to Be Those People"

In his final lecture, Durst begins by telling everyone that God is willing to take 99 percent of the responsibility for the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. But God cannot do it alone. Man must assume 1 percent of the responsibility. To fulfill his 1 percent share of responsibility, man must give 100 percent.

We are like tigers on the prowl. We can move this way or that; to draw out value or not; to open our hearts or not. The only thing that is necessary is the human response. Everything can be made new. God is working now just as he has been working in the past. He has provided the plan. All we have to do is respond and give one hundred percent.

Durst says that man's "original responsibility" was very simple: To follow the truth. He holds up a placard listing man's present responsibilities: "1) Find Truth, 2) Follow Truth, and 3) Solve the practical problem." (He ?

We can do God's work only if we can follow the value of our understanding. We can start to recreate truth by following that person who embodies that universal love. God has to work through some one who embodies his standard. Who is God's chosen one? He will choose the one who has fulfilled His will, based on the law of merit. . . .

Durst holds up another placard listing three types of merit: "1) Ancestral merit, 2) Group Merit, [and] 3) Individual merit." "We come at the end of a long ancestral line. Most of us are here [at Booneville] because of ancestral merit." He adds that everyone in the room probably has righteous ancestors--people of conscience and vision. Their righteousness of the past had a great deal to do with each person being in Booneville now.

Who is God going to work through today? People who follow someone who works through law and principle. It originally was intended [by God] for us to understand this and accomplish our responsibility. It is meant to be an actuality. All things can be accomplished but we must understand how everyone must work together. We have to be large people for this time. . . . We want to be those people [cheers]! We want to be those people who take responsibility for our ancestors. We want to be those who choose the best of our ancestors and glorify the moment. We will literally die unless we see from God's point of view. We are up against the wall! We have a choice between being tough for goodness or loose for evil. . . . All our ancestors can be redeemed if we understand truth, power, and life. We need to be big people for a big age, to sweat for earth, shed tears for our brothers, and blood for heaven!

. . . The only way you can possess any thing is by offering yourself. If you are going to have ideals you may as well have the greatest ideals. Nothing is as powerful as people who are ready to embody those ideals and are willing to put themselves on the line for what they really believe. We have to open ourselves to live, to act and to think big. All we have to do is respond and we can accomplish everything. All we have to be is thoughtful and truthful and the world is ours [cheers].

This concluding lecture dramatically underscores the lofty ideals that can be realized when everyone accepts responsibility and works together.

### Consensual Validation

People completing their first weekend at Booneville face a dilemma: they can return home, as most originally have planned, or acquiesce to the urges of their respective buddies and stay for an entire week. In the haste and uncertainty during the final moments of the weekend, many prospects choose to remain. The overwhelming kindness and attention members have extended to them frequently is the strongest factor influencing their decision. At the close of the week-end training session, a member briefed a colleague on her efforts to entice her buddy to remain: "He has heard enough of the truth. What should I do now?" the woman asked. "Well, if he has heard enough of the truth, then love him some more," said the other.

Rather than present prospective members with a join-or-else ultimatum, at the close of the week-long training session members "invite" guests to remain for another week. During my observations, slightly more than half of the prospects chose to stay beyond the first week. Nearly all those who remain experience a gradual conversion and become members of the Family after three more weeks of indoctrination.

The week-long training session follows a structured and

routinized course. Activities are organized in a manner similar to those of the weekend. All events and other forms of interaction between members and guests are carried out with precision. Together, they move rapidly through these various events: lectures; group discussions; recreation; and special gatherings for skits, singing, meals, and testimonies. Once again, members make a disciplined, unified effort to involve prospective members in total participation. From the outset of the week early Monday morning, as they face the problematic task of persuading their prospects to remain at Booneville, members continue to cooperate in ways that are "effective and inspiring," consistent with Neil Solonen's instructions (p. 65).

Each morning begins with "jumping it." Theodore rekindles enthusiasm by circulating around the training session area with a guitar, singing "Wake up! wake up, you sleepy head. . . . When the red, red robin comes bob-bob-bobbin' along." He calls out, "Hurry, everybody, exercises begin in fifteen minutes." True to his instructions (p. 59), members emerge from their sleeping bags smiling and displaying collective exuberance. They rush their guests through the morning preparations for a gathering of all participants around a large table in one of the trailers. As each person arrives, he is handed a song book and joins in singing, "Zip-a-dee-doo-dah, zip-a-dee-ay, my, oh my, what a wonderful day! Plenty of sunshine heading my way. Zip-a-dee-doo-dah,

zip-a-dee-ay." People hold hands and smile across the table at each other. When the singing subsides, Theodore says, "Good morning, everybody!" Good morning!" everyone answers in return. After a prayer to Heavenly Father asking for guidance and help to fulfill the Family's "purpose," he announces:

We are going to have cereal drama. Another really great tradition. We share how we came to the Family while we eat our cereal. That's why we call it cereal drama. . . . The theme for the day is "Leave a Plus," that is, leave a situation better than you found it, like when you return your cup to a sink, wash a cup besides yours instead of leaving yours for someone else. Okay? ["Okay."]

Before cereal drama begins, Theodore reminds all prospects (non-members) to speak only to people who have been at the training session longer. He cites this rule as one of the Family's "insights" gained through months and years of showing people how to realize their full potential.

Participants do not disagree with or question the necessity of fairness of the limitation on those with whom they may converse. The restriction on communication is accepted openly by members and prospective members who have been at Booneville at least one week. Announcements such as Theodore's are made casually and immediately. The audience applauds or cheers in agreement. Nearly all the people beginning their first week at Booneville also are anxious to cooperate. Individuals may harbor private doubts about the legitimacy of announced rules, yet they would be extremely reluctant to protest either immediately or to potential members.

New people have been conditioned through their week-end participation to join in the overwhelming verbal consensus at Booneville. It will be recalled that Joseph asked at the opening of the training session, "Are you ready for the greatest weekend of your lives?" "Yes!" was the tumultuous response (p. 36). Group leaders announce, "It's like we are going to be married for the next thirty-six hours. Give one hundred percent all the time" (p. 37). "Okay!" is the reply.

The momentum of the weekend continues into the week. Acclamations, suggestions, and rules always are endorsed. Once again, failure to join in the singing, chants, and cheers places one in the role of a maverick, subject to embarrassment or, occasionally, expulsion.

The week-end training session is organized around well-defined rules and procedures. Subtle forms of social control, initiated during the week-end training, extend into the week. Besides the exclusion of conversation between new people, other rules prevail. At the outset of the week-end workshop, individuals were told they should always remain with their group. During the week, every movement participants make also is pre-determined. Individuals who express a desire to be alone are admonished for their independence. They are told: "Why do you want to be alone with all these people here who want to be with you? You enjoy things much more when there is someone to share it with you!" During the

week, every movement the prospect makes is scrutinized by members as they move together through a pre-established course of events.

Besides rules and procedures consensually validated by cheers or applause, members offer rationales for the regimented structure at Booneville. One member said,

People point out that we have too many rules. But those rules are there because we don't have a conscience! We don't know the difference between good and evil. I'm glad those rules are there, to keep us spiritually centered.

Church members accept this reasoning as necessary and useful to maintain an orderly training session. Their authority is legitimized when new people also accept these rules as pro forma and incorporate them as a basis for their actions. Such control is not interpreted by prospective members as overtly coercive. They arrive at Booneville with high expectations. An aura of happiness is created, and prospects enjoy the emotional activities that require their total attention and compliance. Prospects who remain for the week-long training session assume it will also be very rewarding. "I . . . returned [to Booneville] always looking for that good feeling in my heart" (p. 39). Authority is facilitated by the exhilarating atmosphere members provide for participants.

Prospects passively accept the prescribed rules and regulations but at the same time seize the opportunity to respond actively to the various dramas they are physically



placed in each day. Their movements and communication are restricted (both within Booneville and the external world),<sup>19</sup> yet prospective members experience completely the excitement of interaction with members of a dynamic community--one that expects prospects to play an active role in their assimilation into the Family. Cereal drama is the first of numerous episodes designed to enhance their integration into Booneville's ideal world.

#### Expressions of Self-Fulfillment

The cereal drama is the first opportunity for a new person to demonstrate before the entire training session contingent his faith and commitment. Here, he is free to express his experience of meeting the Family in ways that are appropriate to his disposition and capacities. Church leaders simply ask the individual to tell the story behind his encounter with the Family. Of course, prior accumulated testimonies offered by members provide a common model on which the new person can pattern his testimony. Yet, each prospect's narrated account is uniquely his. Describing the details of involvement can produce a self-confirmation of his attraction to the Family. The audience responds with cheers and applause,

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<sup>19</sup> To ensure that prospective members remain encapsulated and minimize their access to alternative information or ideas, participants are not allowed to have long-distance phone calls in privacy. Speaking with friends or family is discouraged. When a prospect receives a call or insists on making one, a member always accompanies him and remains with him while he talks.

which provides the prospect with a supportive interpretation of his membership experience. He receives acceptance and gains a sense of awareness towards his growing commitment. Mary Ann offered this cereal drama at the beginning of her first week at Booneville.

I came out from California to start a new life. I found a job and an apartment and prayed to meet new people. I did meet a few people, but no one really interesting until I met Daniel on Powell Street in San Francisco. After hearing him describe this place, I just knew I had to come. . . . And to think I almost walked away from it! I was going to leave yesterday but John and Daniel talked to me just before I was to leave. They said, "You just have to have faith! Sometimes you just have to give yourself to that [faith] completely."

The cereal dramas given each morning vary as individual stories but are similar in the circumstances that originally brought prospects to Booneville. All describe personal disruptions or uncertainty prior to meeting the Family. Many members or prospective members were traveling about looking, as one member told me, for "something to satisfy my wanderlust." Others say they were dissatisfied with their jobs. Like Mary Ann, nearly every new prospect nurtures hopes of meeting new people. When reflecting on their involvement in the Creative Community Project, they stress the transformation that occurred in their lives. Such a transition from a relatively mundane world to a dynamic environment of ecstatic youth is described as a "coming home" to one's destiny. Elaine's cereal drama exemplifies the sudden change in self-perceived circumstances--a transition from confusion

to happiness and security.

I was raised back East. We were always moving from one place to another--always uprooting and having to go to another school . . . living in poverty and corruption. I was always afraid of people with hate in their hearts. . . . Since leaving home, I've had just about every kind of job. Waitressing . . . yes, mostly waitressing. I sure get tired of it. It's so wonderful to be in a place where you don't have to feel that fear. It's so hard to explain! [She blushes and is on the verge of tears.] When I first came here, I didn't know what Karen meant when she ran up, hugged me, and said, "At last you're home, welcome!" But now I know what she means. I am home!

Many cereal dramas relate how questions of ultimate concern were solved: "I was just spending my life only reading books and thinking. I always wanted to know the answers. Now they are here. When I met the Family, I felt this was a chance to do something for once in my life."

#### Sustaining Group Unity and Brotherhood

After cereal drama, the training-session contingent is divided into groups composed of a leader, church members, and prospects. Participants spend the entire day with their respective groups. Members continue to display a joyous esprit de corps, and group leaders work to sustain cohesiveness. The group leader gathers her group with a maternal cordiality much as leaders do at the beginning of the weekend. Immediately, a circle forms, and everyone is asked to introduce himself. The groups have an even balance between members and non-members. New prospects completing their first weekend are given special attention. A prospect's buddy remains at Booneville to facilitate his recruitment into the

Family. Groups move together from event to event. Every activity--discussions, lectures, recreation, and gatherings of the entire training-session contingent--is structured to stimulate and hold the attention of all participants. The momentum gathered from rushing everyone through calisthenics, singing, and breakfast is sustained throughout each day. There is not one moment of disorganization or confusion. After breakfast, groups are assigned morning work projects, i.e., cleaning trailers, working in the fields, preparing lunch. Before groups proceed to their tasks, they do a "choo-choo-choo . . . yea pow!" chant, then leave arm in arm. The training-session director makes one last gesture of encouragement. He calls out, "Really love your work!"

The projects are carried out efficiently. Group leaders assign specific tasks and encourage all to sing as they work. Various games are initiated to sustain the pace and collective work spirit. For instance, one group planting beans in the garden divided into two teams and had a race. The race's hectic pace evolved into giddiness. When the laughter subsided, someone shouted, "Yea bean crew!" Leaders also ask people to volunteer individual songs. Church members readily comply by singing selections memorized from the song book. All the new people are encouraged to volunteer their own solos, a strategy designed to increase their participation. The games and singing during work periods help keep participants' attention focused on group activity

rather than elsewhere.

The groups conclude work by huddling together for a "choo-choo" chant, then merrily run back to the training area, holding hands and singing. The groups converge on the lawn and form a large circle. Still ecstatic, everyone sways and sings "Happy Heart." The lyrics reveal the feelings of the participants. Once everyone has gathered, Theodore reinstills unity by exclaiming, "Isn't it great to be here with your heavenly brothers and sisters?" Everyone yells, "Yes!" Theodore calls out, "Could you feel this way with anyone else?" "No!" shouts the group.

Immediately after the songs, groups move gaily to the lecture trailer. Lectures are given three times each day. Members engage in preliminary festivities to stimulate participants. It is essential that they assume a receptive, emotional attitude towards the lecturer. Because they have listened to all the lectures, potential members in their second, third, or fourth week of indoctrination are not as easily aroused as people beginning their first week at Booneville. The lectures are presented in a daily sequence and repeated each week.

Like the week-end gathering in the Chicken Palace, dramatization of lectures remains the vehicle for the message. Before all groups arrive in the trailer, song practice is underway. Participants form a circle for a medley of five to ten songs. During serious songs, everyone sways

back and forth with arms draped around brothers and sisters. The aura of unity is sustained during more casual songs. Members hop up and down or kick their legs high in the air. New people quickly learn to synchronize their movements with experienced participants.

Prior to the last song, an older member announces, "This next song ["Amazing Grace"] is about being with each other for ten thousand years in the Heavenly Kingdom. If we work really hard, we can spend all that time together! Won't that be great?" "Yes!" is the response.

To further prepare the audience, a condition of silence is imposed just before the director enters the trailer.<sup>20</sup> No one is supposed to speak while folding chairs are arranged in rows. This solemn mood is established to counter disruptive "spirits" that may invade the setting through the avenue of idle talk and possibly bring doubt and confusion to the less steadfast participants.

When the director finally enters the trailer, members show their admiration. "Hi, Noah!" they call out. Noah merely nods his head, smiles, then walks through the trailer and out the back door. Standing alone on the porch, he gazes into the horizon, then bows his head for a moment before returning to give the lecture. In response to Noah's pious

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<sup>20</sup>Theodore delivers lectures on the first day in the absence of Noah, the director. On Tuesday, Noah returns from his day off and presents all the lectures for the remainder of the week.

preparations, participants assume an alert and reverent attitude.

### Following God's Will

Examining the lecture content reveals idealistic rationals for group unity and conformity of beliefs. To begin Monday's first lecture Theodore writes on the blackboard:

1. Whole purpose leads to right direction  
goodness . . . and happiness.
2. Individual purpose leads to wrong direction  
evil . . . and unhappiness.

He then begins the lecture:

If we follow our conscience, we will always do good, but the problem comes when we have to sacrifice something for the long-range benefit of others; then it is difficult to do goodness because we always follow our desires. We have been vacillating between the two right and wrong direction because we are ignorant of what is true. A high standard of truth is living for the whole. We have to look to a high standard and when we hear it, it strikes something in our consciousness.

How can we actualize a higher standard? We have to overcome our ego and follow someone who speaks with a high standard, someone who embodies this Truth. If you follow Truth, you'll never regret it. . . . Man isn't growing spiritually. We need a new Truth. We have been unable to love because we have lost our way to God. God's will is to give joy back to him. I just realized today how much God suffers more than we do.

[His voice becomes more assergice and emotional.]

The lectures are consistent in spirit and imagery with the vision imparted by Dr. Durst: a plea for one to follow his conscience, sacrifice for others and actualize a high standard of truth. In this way, one can contribute to the actual establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven centered on God's ideals to realize his full potential. Like Durst,

Theodore exhorts his audience to accept responsibility, cleanse themselves for God, and embrace the vision of a heaven on earth.

In an earlier lecture, Durst divulges the necessity of a "guiding ideology for the 'restoration' of the Ideal World." Theodore also insists that we need a "new Truth" and urges his audience to follow someone who embodies a high standard of truth. Durst warns that failure to recognize such an "Avatar" will result in enormous suffering. To avert an apocalyptic catastrophe, God has provided a plan, but what is necessary is the human response--people who are willing to put themselves on the line for what they really believe is true. Together, people can recreate Truth by following God's Chosen One, who embodies His standard.

During Tuesday morning breakfast, the theme for the day is announced: "What is God's will?" Prospects are told to ponder this question. Noah's lectures provide a guideline to the answer. Throughout the week, he speaks with evangelical force to an audience that grows increasingly emotional. His first lecture, "The Creation," informs participants about their true relationship to God.

God is the original being of the whole creation. You are just an expression of God. . . . You want to find out what God looks like? [Noah draws a smiling face on the blackboard.] Oh, no! God doesn't look like that! He is insubstantial and invisible. But we can know what God is like. He is expressed in everything in the Creation! Look at the Creation. Isn't love expressed in everything? God is everywhere. You are not just you but an expression of the whole universe. You are sons and daughters of God. To be united in mind



and body with God in His purpose for Creation. When that happens, man can rule the Universe. Did you know that man can rule the Universe? By what? [He peers over the lectern and members immediately say, "Love!" "And nothing else?" ask Noah. "No!" is the reply.]

The whole Universe is made to respond to love. When man unites with God, the whole Universe responds to man. [Noah cites the story of St. Francis as an analogy.] Don't you think it would be great to have the whole Universe respond to you? [The participants respond, "Yes!"]

When everyone is united, it's like one big family. That's why the whole Universe is groaning in travail--waiting for us to live in perfect order and harmony.

All love of God is expressed in the perfect family. This is God's ideal, where everyone looks up to one another. Why did God make the Creation? ["Joy!" is the resounding reply. Next, Noah takes a drink of orange juice and says "Ah" to show his pleasure.] When you take a sip of California orange juice, what is produced? ["Joy!"] That's it! Whenever there is give-and-take action between subject [Noah] and object [juice], joy is produced. So joy happens when you have give-and-take action with another person. Wouldn't you like to have a perfect marriage, to share everything together, to be obedient to each other? ["Yes!"] Would you like to be completely obedient to the one you love? ["Yes!" members yell.] Love is the only thing that can completely control man. Love is the only thing that can completely control you. . . . We should have three kinds of love: love for God, love for our parents, and love for perfect parents. It's hard to love your parents because they aren't perfect. They aren't one with God. When they are united with God, the Heavenly Kingdom will be established. In the Heavenly Kingdom, you would do anything for God and He would do anything for you. Wouldn't that be great? ["Yes!"] Would you like to be a slave for God? ["Yes!"]

Once again, everyone sings an appropriate song immediately after the lecture concludes. The lyrics to "The Kingdom of Heaven Is at Hand," sung by memory to a swinging melody, regenerate a jovial mood:

Come on, brother, live your life the way that  
Father wants you to do. Forget about all sorrow and  
strife, and joy just has to come unto you. Come on,  
brother, try to decide. It's no easy road to be free.

But the day of the flaming sword will be the day of Victory! Ai-ee, can't you hear it calling to you? Won't you try to understand? All I'm trying to say-- the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Ai-ee! Ai-ee!

Guiding Prospects towards Truth  
and Transformation

After his lecture, Noah takes his guitar and stands on a chair. Towering over the others, he leads everyone in another series of songs. Rather than announce the song by name, he calls out a page number. Members start their chorus immediately since they know all the songs by heart, including the respective page numbers. They help new people locate the selection in the song book. The prospects memorize many of the songs by the end of the week. Even though they are repeated over and over, no one appears to grow weary or complain.

Regimented daily activity--song practices, lectures, discussions, more lectures, singing, and discussions--continues to emphasize the placement of prospects in situations that require them to emulate the actions of members. Chants, cheers, singing and other routine gestures of enthusiasm become automatic reactions. As various activities are repeated throughout the week, new people require fewer and fewer behavioral cues. After a week or two, their mannerisms, language, and enthusiasm bear strong resemblance to those of the members.

When the last repetitious song is over, group leaders gather their respective charges together and lead them off to

different areas. Some groups sit by the creek or on the lawn in small circles, while other groups find a quiet room in one of the trailers. These meetings follow the same procedure as those of the weekend. All hold hands, sing lighthearted songs, and symbolize their unity and mutual love by passing around pieces of food during mealtimes. The leaders direct the course and content of discussions, aided by other members who continue to think of themselves as assistant group leaders (p. 70).

Instead of being optional, it is assumed that all participants will share their ideas and inspirations with the group. Unlike most evangelical encounters of this sort, potential members are not required to purge themselves of guilt feelings. Rather than pressure them to confess a sinful past, members encourage their prospects to express a sense of hope and renewal. It is not necessary to provoke them to become alienated from their prior lives. Patiently, leaders and other members coax prospects to "reveal themselves" (p. 72) and reward them subsequently with gestures of affection for sharing with the group what they learned from the lecture or how they are "actualizing" their goals. Fellow participants quickly become a new reference group for prospects, and trust among their new "brothers and sisters" is emphasized throughout the week.

As the week progresses, the prospect receives continued reaffirmation for his inspirations, actions, and ideas if

they are consistent with the Family's world view. Members' paternal style of support (cheers, hugs, and applause) serves to enhance the value of positive expressions. The prospective member is able to perceive himself as an individual with views and emotions that have meaning and importance to people in his group, as well as all other church members with whom he communicates. In Booneville's closed environment, church members manage to structure events in a way that provides all participants with elaborate reinforcement at prescribed intervals. The reassuring responses offered by members can have dynamic consequences.

Members' efforts to convince the new person that he belongs with the Family largely are contingent on how the latter interprets his entire experience at Booneville. The continual array of events, incidents, and action are meticulously constructed to provide a perceptual window for the prospect to look through as he participates. Of course, the potential member is free to perceive and judge independently, but the meanings and realities conveyed by church members' dramatic consensus are influential and difficult to deny without the availability of alternative interpretations.

Besides promoting the prospect's total participation, group leaders encourage him to strive for personal growth by establishing goals and evaluating the progress made towards those goals during the training session. At mid-week, leaders announce to their groups:

Think of three things you would like to improve in yourself. If you have three things you want to change, and try one hundred percent, just think what you could do in one week! You should keep a journal of your progress. You people in the Family already know about this. We call it a spiritual checklist. Write down a list of things you want to improve in yourself, then evaluate them at the end of the day. I will talk with each of you individually during the week to help you actualize your goals.

Church members' approval of a prospect's progress towards prescribed goals, as well as unanimous endorsement of his cereal drama and inspirations, helps the potential member perceive a personal transformation. He can begin to develop a new self-concept within this social context and perhaps attribute these positive changes to his involvement with the Family.

The lectures also reveal to the prospect the magnitude of the Family's vision and how imperative it is that he respond by assuming the role of a member. As the week passes, Noah continues to speak to an attentive audience. Members support his exhortations with cheers, affirmative head nods, and even tears during his more emphatic descriptions of the world's tragic history.

Noah begins his "God's Purpose for History" lecture with a mimic parody of a hell-fire and brimstone preacher. He slaps his lectern with his fist, then leans over it and shouts:

The Last Days are here! . . . We have to be ready! What is the purpose of all spiritual training? So you will be prepared, ready to receive the truth. We are beginning the New Age. The New Age will not be welcomed by everyone. The truth of the new messiah brings may destroy established beliefs,

but those without concepts, the pure of heart, can recognize the messiah right away. If we seek the way with humble hearts, we will know the truth. The worst thing is to be arrogant and not search to know the truth.

Noah explains that God has been working for thousands of years through various historical figures (e.g., Abraham, Moses, and Jesus) to restore the world to a Heavenly Kingdom. According to Noah, we are living in the Last Days. Soon there will be a final confrontation between Satan and God's emissary of truth, the new messiah. God has chosen a perfect man to lead the world in a spiritual victory over Satan and establish the Ideal World.

The mission of the Last Days is to become united with God. Now is the moment--the most important moment for the spiritual salvation of mankind. If we could realize God's plan, America could become great. We are the hope for America. We have to win the love of the rest of the world! We have to love bomb the whole world. Don't you think?

The audience yells "Yes!" in unison, and Noah continues to cite examples of America's social chaos and immense problems, including crime, poverty, meaninglessness in life:

We are falling apart! America has lost its purpose! We are the people who have to reshape the world--to be the model for love and truth. If we don't, Satan will rule the earth. We have to do our part. God needs us. He has to have someone to be his ideal. . . . I know it's hard to always relate to God. But if there is one perfect man, he can relate to God, and we can unite with him [members cheer "Yeah!"]. If we have one perfect man, we can unite this country and eventually the world. God is counting on us. Now is the time to respond. God can't do it without us. [Cheers.]

The lectures are designed to move the prospect to feel

a tremendous moral responsibility to join the Family. The church is placed in a moving time perspective, using past history to account for its crucial role in the world. The lecturer presents historical evidence that we are living in the Last Days. The world soon will experience an Armageddon between the forces of Satan and the Lord of the Second Advent, along with his followers (church members). The world can be "restored" and the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth established under the rule of this new messiah, but success depends on the collective effort of those chosen to respond to the will of God and follow the new messiah.

Prospects are lured by the opportunity to be in the vanguard of this utopian vision. It becomes believable on the basis of step-by-step reasoning that leads up to sweeping non-rational insights and members' assertions that the Principles are "logical" as well as relevant to their lives. Church members tell prospects that their lives only can have "purpose and direction" if they "embrace the truth" and work to build the Heavenly Kingdom. The force of this myth is fused into the church's totalist doctrine, the Principles. The resulting "logic" can be so compelling that it simply replaces the realities of individual experience.

#### Following Center

The Principles also provide doctrinal legitimacy for the subordination of individuals to authority. Training-session participants are told to "follow center." The

"center" is vested in the person who happens to be closest to the source of God's truth. Ultimately, Reverend Moon is closest to the source of truth, and the order of authority extends down a hierarchical network of administrators and local directors to group leaders and finally other members. A group leader explained to prospects the meaning of following center:

One thing I work on is sacrificing my own concepts and follow someone who is more on center. It's like God works from a center through a person that completely understands his purpose. Here [the training session] the person most on center is Noah [the director]. . . . Everything you do goes right if it is centered. Someone tells you what to do and the source of that is perfection because the person who told him what to do had been told by someone else who was just that much closer to the center.

The underlying assumption is that the Principles are more valid than the personal concepts and judgments of members and prospects. Although the Principles' rationale for following center is readily endorsed, participants rarely inquire about the original source of the Principles. The lectures imply that the Principles were revealed by God to his chosen central figure of contemporary history (variously referred to as the perfect man, the new messiah, and the Lord of the Second Advent). The church has not revealed his identity publicly, nor is it ever divulged to potential members at Booneville. Many members are certain that Reverend Moon is the new messiah, yet they are careful not to mention his name. If a prospect happens to know or



suspect Reverend Moon's connection to Creative Community Project, he discreetly is asked not to mention his name to other new people. Once, when a prospect asked why Reverend Moon's name was never mentioned, his buddy said, "Please don't say anything about him; it will only confuse the new people here. They will be negative before they have a chance to learn everything."

The following conversation between a prospect and his buddy explains how most people making the transition from prospect to member learn the identity of the new messiah as well as cope with any misgivings about being expected to follow center. The prospect asked his buddy how the Family happened to be endowed with the Principles. Mike, a relatively new member in the Family, pondered a moment then said:

[Mike:] Well, that's a question that slipped my mind at first. I didn't wonder about that until after about two weeks of lectures. The Principles were a revelation to many people in the Family.

[Mike's buddy:] Well, who told them?

[Mike:] One of our teachers. The revelation came to him first and he told others.

[Mike's buddy:] Is this teacher the Lord of the Second Advent Noah has been telling us about in the lectures? Who is he?

[Mike:] Yes, it's the Lord of the Second Advent. I now have an idea who he is.

[Mike's buddy:] You have been in the Family for four months and no one has told you who he is?

[Mike:] No. No one ever tells you. You have to find that out for yourself. It's up to you to recognize the "L.S.A." If your heart is open, you will know who he is.

[Mike's buddy:] Did you know right away you wanted to be part of the Family?

[Mike:] I was slow in making up my mind. I was very confused and physically exhausted. But I prayed really sincerely and after awhile I couldn't see why

I was so worried or had the questions and doubts that I did. I was negative for a long time, but I saw people who I could relate to who were believing. I couldn't understand why.

[Mike's buddy:] What were you negative about?

[Mike:] Having to follow center was one thing I had trouble with. At first, I thought this was like some Nazi camp, always being told what to do. I wondered if I would have to sacrifice my freedom. But now I can see that if you didn't follow center nothing would ever get done. If I disagree with someone in the center position, then there is conflict.

[Mike's buddy:] Did you feel happy once you joined the Family?

[Mike:] No. I still didn't get into the swing of things. I didn't like flower selling. I tested out a lot of other alternatives that were going on. I went to hear lectures given by religious teachers and talked to many people. But everything I heard told me I should return to the Family.

### The True Parents

Although the Lord of the Second Advent's name is not invoked, he remains in the foreground of discussions and lectures held near the end of the week. Noah meticulously explains how the new messiah will fulfill God's plan for a unified world family. He will complete by marrying the mission Christ failed to finish; then he and his bride will become the True Parents of Mankind. They and their children will set the pattern for God-centered families. Noah tells that such marriages, blessed by the True Parents, will lay the foundation for "a world restored back to God." "You will be the perfect parents and have perfect children, too!" exclaims Noah. All one has to do is recognize and follow the True Parents.

Group leaders and their assistants continue to share their insights to help prospects interpret the lectures consistent with the specific meaning members attribute to Noah's message. The discussions emphasize the significance of the True Parents as a standard of spiritual purity and authority as yet another rationale for following center.

Leaders ask people in their group to say what they believe is the importance of "having" True Parents. One group leader offered this "insight":

When we think of True Parents, we realize how valuable their lives are . . . so valuable. We are still part of both Satan and God, but they are perfect and pure! They are a direct link to God. That is why it is so important to bind with them and always follow the center. The center person is closest to our True Parents. It doesn't matter where you are, the center person is like the mini-messiah. You may not think it's best [to follow center] but that's your ego speaking. If someone doesn't follow center, deterioration of that person takes place.

Other members also commented. Samuel said:

Our True Parents really had to struggle. They had to search and figure out the Truth. There wasn't anyone to show them the way. It was more difficult for them. Now, they provide the path for us.

Molly lamented that her "physical parents" did not understand her life of sacrifice.

My parents wanted our love so they would let us do anything, but our True Parents set a standard to follow. My parents can't understand why I don't come home very often, but we are still close spiritually.

Jane directed this comment to prospective members:

Our True Parents are spiritually pure. Our

other parents are only our parents physically.  
Our True Parents are here to give you eternal  
life!

Alexander said he returned home to visit his parents  
after being part of the Family for some time. While at  
home, relations with his parents were "not normal."

They really didn't want me to live for the  
Ideal World after all. They said to me, "Be your-  
self." I would say, "I am myself," then they would  
say, "No, your old self." This reflects the back-  
ward thinking in the world. My parents would rather  
have me doing drugs like I used to instead of working  
for peace and world unity.

It was hard to be there [at home], especially  
since they would rather I sat in front of the T.V.  
with a can of beer in my hand.

Leaders very carefully tell prospects that recogni-  
tion and allegiance to the True Parents does not require  
renouncement of familial ties with their actual parents.  
"They gave birth to you. They are your natural parents and  
will always be your real parents. The True Parents are your  
spiritual parents and your bond with them is eternal."  
While not negating the value and importance of natural  
parents, leaders emphasize that natural parents are limited  
in their capacity to guide the spiritual growth of their  
children since they are not spiritually pure like the True  
Parents.

#### Idolization and Emulation of Leaders as Role Models

It may be hazardous to ask prospective members to  
direct their devotion to True Parents identified only on a  
theological level, especially since the Creative Community

Project does not divulge its affiliation with the Unification Church nor are Reverend Moon and his wife mentioned as the True Parents. Hence, the Family provides more visible and tangible individuals as a focal point for reverence and admiration. Dr. Durst and his wife, Onni, serve as surrogate "perfect parents." Workshop participants are told they set the "standard of love" for the Family. By occupying the "center position" (closest to Reverend Moon in the church hierarchy), each serves as a model of perfection for members. One group leader always tells her group after a lecture on Jesus and other historical figures,

Your perfection is your own responsibility. It is possible for you as well. It tells you in the Bible that the way is through Jesus, but you can't reach perfection through Him. It is important to recognize your perfect parent and bind with him in a father-daughter relationship. Someone who you can follow and bind with by working with brothers and sisters instead of having that ego doing what is best for you. The people in the center know how this works; like real pioneers, they can be this model of love. Onni and Dr. Durst especially. Just watch everything they do; how they move. Learn those gestures of kindness. So working toward perfection is really easy. All you have to do is imitate them.

Other group leaders consistently encourage participants to also model their behavior after the more experienced members.

We should all help each other. I know you can all take care of yourself, but as Onni says, "You have to rehabilitate yourself." That's why it's so great to have older members around for us to emulate. I want you to think of three people you really think highly of and write down the qualities in them that you admire. I will check back with you from time to time to see how you are coming along.

Prospective members' best opportunity to be close to older members and learn their qualities is at the end of the day when all the groups gather around a warm campfire. This is the culmination of a seemingly endless stream of events linked by a kaleidoscope of singing, hugs, laughter, cooperative work tasks, speeches, dodge-ball games--all shared with intense enthusiasm.

This is a special time. People sit with their respective groups, leaning on one another half exhausted yet still enthused. Together, they sip hot chocolate and watch the sun set. Many comment that at this moment, more than any other, they feel like a part of a family. Noah orchestrates the evening. He leads the singing of popular and religious hymns while accompanying the singing on a guitar. Each group performs a hilarious skit that portrays the joys and virtues of being part of the Family. Noah also routinely says a lengthy prayer. It often refers to the Family's "higher purpose"--a view of itself as a vanguard building God's Ideal World. Prayers bear the same message as the lectures and songs.

Father, you have been waiting ten thousand years for the world to be restored to you. This is a time in history when the minority really is right. . . . This is the culmination of history, the apex. We have been chosen to do this great work. What we do affects the rest of eternity. When I remember that, I put all I've got into every moment. If we work really hard now, we can spend ten thousand years in the Heavenly Kingdom.

Testimonies of Transition

Even during this relatively relaxed gathering around the campfire, church members work energetically to corroborate their recruitment efforts. With typical synchronized cooperation, they support the impressions and inspirations of members and prospects. Resounding yeas and applause accompany those who share how they were influenced by lectures, felt their hearts open to the love extended by members of the Family, or became free of inhibition, like the young women who said, "After awhile you really open up! (p. 73).

New people are especially encouraged to offer their reflections. Often, Noah will say, "Who hasn't spoken yet this week? Everybody should have a chance." The finale each evening comes when two members are called on to discuss their transition into the Family or describe a special incident meaningful to their membership.

Church members sharing personal testimonies realize they are potential role models. They are the "older members" who group leaders encourage participants to emulate. Many of these people were among the first members when Creative Community Project was found in the early 1970s. They all have been in the Family at least one year and usually hold positions of responsibility for the organization and production of the training session. Either they are group leaders or are coordinates like Theodore, Marie, or Joseph. Older

members supposedly embody high standards and actualize their full potential, hence they are respected and admired by less prominent members. Aware that they are models of exemplary behavior, the members are conscientious about how they present their stories to the training session. Like testimonies offered during the weekend, such stories are elaborately prepared descriptions of startling changes in their lives once they became involved with the Creative Community.

The stories vary in quality, yet they all convey effective imagery that allows empathetic prospects to anticipate having a similar experience. Participants once again can visualize the details of these dramatic narratives and imagine their own transformation.

The testimonies are diverse in theme. Some imply that participants can have a profound religious experience like Marie's revelation from God (p. 50). Many describe the more tangible rewards of being part of a community, emphasizing the happiness of living with people bonded by common ideals. Others are accounts of personal growth such as learning to accept responsibility (p. 93). The following narrative is one member's story that uniquely contains elements of all three: a lesson, a supernatural experience, and the joys of being a Family member.

Joanie told the audience about her fairytale childhood growing up with Esther, Maria, and Theodore. (They all



are now members of the Family.) Joanie became sad when her older brothers and sisters moved away because she missed the fun and excitement they once shared. Joanie noted that Maria was the first to join the Family when she returned home for a visit. It was like old times again. She talked endlessly about "how great" it was. She and Esther decided to return to California with Maria to find out for themselves. Joanie felt very happy to be part of a family once again.

I wanted to see everyone in the Family as true brothers and sisters, but sometimes it was hard. They were all so different and some of them [she pauses] . . . well sometimes it was hard. So I would try to draw them into my heart one at a time by finding one thing about that person that I liked. When I discovered something about that person that I could like, I would say, "Oh, you're my brother. You're my sister!"

Doing that helped some, but it was still hard for me to understand how we could all be brothers and sisters. I decided to ask Onni how we could all be brothers and sisters. She looked at me with that patient smile of hers and said, "How are you, Theodore, Maria, and Esther related?" "Because we have the same father and mother," I said. Onni just said, "Uh-huh." I thought for a minute and suddenly Onni's answer became so clear. Of course we were all brothers and sisters because we had the same Heavenly Father!

Since there were so few of us back then [four years ago], we wished so much that we could share our Family with everyone. One night we all prayed and prayed for more people to come and live with us. I didn't know how to ask Heavenly Father. I thought about it for a long time. I decided I would just say "Heavenly Father" over and over again.

After repeating "Heavenly Father" for what seemed like "hours," a rapturous scene "suddenly appeared" before her. She said,

A beautiful golden meadow opened before me! There were hundreds and hundreds of people. They were all lined up on both sides of the meadow, singing and

playing in the sunshine. I saw all my brothers and sisters there. They were all members of the Family from all the countries around the world. At the head of the meadow was one of our greatest teachers [Reverend Moon, presumably]. He was smiling down on everyone with such a peaceful look on his face. I felt then that everything would be all right. I knew our Family would grow and grow!

Testimonies are the success stories of the Unification Church movement. As narratives of individual achievement and fulfillment, they augment and reify the Creative Community's beliefs, goals, and lifestyle. Testimonies can have persuasive impact on the prospect's decision to remain at Booneville. Testimonies have a hopeful yet motivating tone that impresses on the participant the gravity of the church's world-saving mission.

The members have a sincere belief in their performance and construct their narratives to move the prospect towards feeling a tremendous moral responsibility to join the Family. Testimonies also are supported by applause, cheers and other gestures of affirmation choreographed to influence prospective members' interpretation. The atmosphere in which testimonies are imparted also is crucial to their overall effectiveness. The night-time campfire camaraderie is an appropriate context for these stories.

### Overcoming Doubt and Negativity

As a routine during an evening gathering near the end of each week, Noah shared his testimony. He delved into the events that led to his encounter with the Family. Like many

people when first coming to Booneville, he had a tentative attitude that changed rapidly after a week at Ideal City.

As a student at a large midwestern university, Noah was involved actively in the anti-war movement. "At the time, I thought it was an immoral war," he explained. Noah described himself as a good student ("I never needed to study to get good grades") with a beard and shoulder-length hair--an archetype of the early 1970s counter-culture youth vitally concerned about the wayward direction of mankind.

I thought about how terrible it would be to die without having made the world a better place, without having done anything meaningful. After I finished college, I tied up loose ends and set out to find the Ideal World with a Kelty pack. I heard what a great place Berkeley was--the "Mecca of the West"--so I decided to go there.

After arriving in Berkeley, Noah immediately visited his friend Christy, a member of the Family. Within an hour after arriving in Berkeley, he was at the Unification Church center listening to an introductory lecture. Noah felt very "skeptical" towards the obvious unity among the members and the constant attention they gave him. "I just didn't want to believe people could be so happy and kind. But I decided to come to a training session to see what it was all about." Noah came to Booneville for a weekend, but his skepticism was not alleviated.

I just wanted to work on the farm instead of going to lectures. I didn't put my negativity on others. I just sat by myself and stared impassively at everyone. I was really confused and didn't know what to do. Finally, I went to see Onni and asked her if

I should go to the training session again. Somehow I felt I could trust her. It was the first time I could trust anyone! I said to her, "If you want me to go, I will go." She didn't say anything for a long time, but she finally said, "Go!"

Noah returned to the workshop determined to have an open mind and find out " . . . what the Family was really all about."

I prayed even though I didn't believe in God: "God, help me understand these people who have such great ideals." Suddenly everything changed. For the first time, I really felt His heart. All this time I wanted to change the world--but do it by myself. Up until then, I didn't trust even one person. But now I trusted the Family. I decided to stay with them. When I left the workshop with Maria [after three weeks of indoctrination], I told her about the Ideal World I had always envisioned. She took my hand and said, "That is what we are trying to do." Just then, I realized it was with the Family that I wanted to work for mankind--to become part of this greater-than-self tradition.

Noah's story is presented in a fashion that prospective members can identify with easily. Embarking on a new life as a college graduate, he came to Berkeley with great expectations of making the world a better place. He was a synthesis of Horatio Alger and Eric Hoffer's "True Believer,"<sup>21</sup> setting out to find the Ideal World. He, like many others, came to Booneville not knowing what to expect. Noah presumed he would work on a communal farm but discovered himself surrounded by very ecstatic people who not only wanted to work but also to shout songs and cheers. He found that people at Booneville wanted to hear lectures about the

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<sup>21</sup>Eric Hoffer, The True Believer (New York: Harper and Row, 1951).

restoration of God's Kingdom and share how they were inspired by these revolutionary "ideas." Noah held fast to his uncertainties but eventually discovered they were unfounded. He chose to abandon his skepticism and trust Onni and others in the Family.

Noah's doubts slowly dissolved after he openly voiced his reluctance to church members, especially when he sought the counsel of Onni, Maria, and other leaders. The Family's recruitment potential is enhanced if the prospect's private assessment of his workshop experience is known. Members can counteract "negativity and skepticism" if they are aware of prospects' inner viewpoints. Prospective members' thoughts are beyond the Family's domain unless they can provoke them to express themselves. Of course, group discussions partially reveal their feelings, yet often in those circumstances prospects may not reveal their deepest concerns and reservations because they always are expected to conform to group consensus and speak only in positive terms. Members are aware of the constraint they place on honest communication in group settings. Such situations are designed to exclude viewpoints that threaten the reality members project, yet ironically they also inhibit the revelation of prospects' private doubts--doubts that can "fester and grow" (p. 89) and jeopardize the possibility of recruitment.

To resolve this dilemma, members constantly ask their respective buddies and other prospects to express their

reactions to lectures, testimonies, and other events. If the new person exudes negativity, a member often refers to his own personal experiences while a newcomer at Booneville-- experiences that alleviated his doubts. If the potential member has reservations toward the Principles, he is asked to be patient. "As you learn more about the Principles, deeper and deeper meaning is revealed. That is why it is so important to hear the lectures over and over!" exclaimed one leader to her group. "Samuel has been in our Family for four years, but he says that the Principles always are revealing new Truths to him."

Doubts held by prospects that cannot be neutralized through personal assurances or theological clarification often are handled by an older member. The member will approach a superior, i.e., Noah or Maria, to seek advice or ask that leader to talk privately to a prospect having misgivings. Being practiced and proficient, older members often can mitigate the prospect's confusion or uncertainty and actually serve as a source of inspiration.

#### Symbols of Commitment

Few participants openly express "negativity." Most appear very receptive to the Family's endless variety of emotional and cognitive appeals. Nearly all prospects willingly comply in ways encouraged and prescribed by church members: strict adherence to consensual norms and rules of

conduct, sharing their ideas each time it is their turn during formal group occasions and selecting to emulate various leaders as role models.

Eventually, many prospects project indications of their growing allegiance to the Family. They consistently volunteer outward signs of endorsement of all occasions as well as show a desire to be viewed as members in transition. Often, these prospects seem compelled to offer their inspirations exuberantly, sing as loud as possible, and otherwise participate with great intensity. Other visible signs of acceptance emerge. Girls may begin dressing in conservative clothes, often borrowed from a Family member, in favor of the more stylish clothes they wore on arrival. Men often will get haircuts. Not wanting to stand out in contrast to the short hair worn by all male members, a prospect with long hair will ask a "sister" to cut his hair. Such actions are symbolic of increasing commitment--a way of demonstrating to members that he or she plans to remain at Booneville for the duration of the training.

After a period in Ideal City, some prospective members will assume the initiative and help church members shepherd new prospects through the course of the training session. With unbridled energy, they will do everything within means to aid the newcomer's assimilation into the excitement, realization of Truth, and familial love that has absorbed them over the prior two or three weeks. Often, the attention

they give newcomers exceeds the members' own efforts. One young lady frequently would approach new people in her group, take them by the hand, and whisper, "Heavenly Father loves you!" Other seasoned prospects assure newcomers that the Principles will answer all their questions.

### Dramatic Commitment Scenarios

Potential members return to the Bay Area after three or four weeks to continue their active involvement with the Family. Although they will be recognized as actual members, their integration into the movement is not complete. They will be subject to more commitment-building activities. Usually, members disclose minimal information about what potential members can expect once they return to the Bay Area. When members in transition leave the training session, they can assume their daily lives will include communal living. With other members of Creative Community, however, they usually spend their first few days selling flowers with the Family's fund-raising team. One member told her buddy:

I sold flowers when I got back. We went everywhere--bars, bus stations, the campus, even on the streets. It's a lot of fun. I met all kinds of people. It really helps you overcome your fears, and it's a good way to learn how you can actualize.

During one of his final lectures, Noah provides an imaginary flower-selling scenario. This one-man drama helps the potential member conceive the trials and temptations he will undergo once he takes up the life of a Family member.



Prior to presenting the scenario, Noah characteristically concludes his lecture by calling on prospects to accept their "portion of responsibility." Using a humorous analogy, he prevails on his audience: "Greetings, Heavenly Father wants you. Your draft notice is truth. Are you glad He asked you?" "Yes!" is shouted unanimously.

If God asks you, does He have a better person in mind? God never asks you anything He doesn't think you can do. When everyone is in the Heavenly Kingdom, someone will ask you, "Hey did you help build the Heavenly Kingdom?" You can say, "Why, yes, I did!" God is longing for you. God has been waiting for six thousand years. Do you think He likes to see suffering? Do you think He likes to see babies abused by their parents? The Kingdom of Heaven may not return for one thousand years. If we fail, do you want to be responsible for that?

"No!" everyone blurts out. The director adds, "This is the final morning. We can't disappoint God now. Are you ready to establish the Heavenly Kingdom?" "Yes!" is the reply. Noah then launches into a hypothetical situation in which Gerald, a potential member in the audience, returns to the Bay Area along with other new members to begin his first assignment: selling flowers in public places. Gerald's former friends discover him selling flowers on a street corner.

[Friends:] Gerry! What are you doing?  
 [Gerald:] I'm building the Heavenly Kingdom!  
 [Friends:] Gerry! Weren't you going to be a Ph.D.? Look at you now! Come on, stop what you are doing. Let's go to a party.  
 [Gerald:] No, I've got to sell these flowers!

Everyone cheers "yea!" to the outcome of Noah's story. Then he sternly looks at everyone and says:

[Noah:] You might be selling flowers when a friend passes by and says, "Hey, you used to be a success. What happened?" You will say, "Well, I'm building the Ideal World" [cheers]. Your friend will say, "Sure you are!" and say you are crazy, but God will love you all the more if we work to establish Heavenly Kingdom. What's wrong with being crazy for God?

[Audience:] Nothing!

[Noah:] Who is really crazy?

[Audience:] They are!

[Noah:] Ready to be crazy for the Truth? [Yes!] Ready to be crazy for righteousness? [Yes!] Ready to build the Heavenly Kingdom?

[Audience:] Yes!

Noah often includes imaginary dialogues in his lecture routines. As an excellent narrative device, they present the values and vision of the church movement in parable form. Their themes and messages parallel the lecture content (accepting responsibility, setting a high standard of truth, following the new messiah, etc.). Yet, parables are delivered to participants without the harshness of direct pontification and moralizing.

The most intense commitment-generating event is reserved for the final day of the week training session. This scenario is not imaginary like the flower-selling drama but is one in which participants are fully immersed. It also is produced especially for potential members who will soon decide whether to remain with the Family after they complete the training session. On Friday afternoon, the groups form a large circle on the lawn. Everyone waits in anticipation for Noah to join the circle, since he has promised something special. Meanwhile, they chorus "The

Impossible Dream" and numerous other songs. When Noah arrives, he announces that they are going to take a long, rigorous hike. It will be symbolic of Moses' walk up Mt. Sinai to be with God.

When we walk up the mountain, let's have a condition of silence. Try to find Heavenly Father in nature. Also, remember all the great men who walked before us, like Moses. He walked to the top of the mountain everyday to show God his faith.

People walk in small groups, without speaking, over a series of rolling hills, each higher than the previous one. It is a strenuous walk. Noah leads at a very rapid pace. He stops occasionally to let the stragglers catch their breath. Those who are having difficulty are comforted by the more spartan hikers. Finally, the top of the last hill is in sight. Many of the men run the last hundred yards up the steep incline with Noah--an appropriate finish to the group's unified effort. After reaching the top, many return to help others strive up the final distance.

Everyone is jubilant. People hug one another and exclaim, "We made it! We made it, everybody!" Gasping for air but with beaming faces, they all smile at one another and gaze at the floor of the distant valley. It was a difficult journey but now they are happy to be at the top.

Everyone gathers in a large circle around the top of the hill. "Are you glad you made it?" Noah shouts. "Yes!" all reply. He leads the group in a chant, instructing them to shout as loud as possible: "We love you Heavenly Father!"

After shouting this over and over, people are told to yell "Victory, Victory, Victory!" adding to the deliriousness of the moment. After chanting, the group sings a medley of songs while holding hands in a circle. The first is The Rainbow Song:

Father, make me a rainbow, to bridge old and new;  
 Father, make me a gateway for many to come through.  
 Father, you are the sunlight in a very dark land;  
 Father, make me a prism held in your hand. . . .  
 Our voices blend now into one loving song;  
 The dream grows true now, beautiful--strong!

Noah asks Ellen to say a prayer. In a strong, emphatic voice that reveals her dedication, she says:

We want to come running back to you, Father.  
 We will do anything to restore this world to you,  
 Father. Make us worthy, Father. Many more people  
 have suffered, and struggled, and climbed higher  
 mountains than we have, Father. . . .

After Ellen's prayer, Noah directs everyone to scatter about the hill to pray individually. He insists that people be a certain distance apart to give everyone privacy.

Most of the prayers are intense and expressive. Sporadic cries, moans, and loud utterances emanate from different parts of the hillside. When satisfied that he has dispersed everyone properly, Noah returns to the summit of the hill. He also kneels to pray with conviction. His prayer is loud enough for others to hear.

Let me take on their [the group's] responsibility so that they may know you better, Father.  
 Let me sacrifice for them so that they may understand you; to know your heart, Father! Please, Father. . . .

After nearly an hour of singing, chanting, and prayer

on the summit, Noah asks, "Is everyone ready to go back?" "Yes!" The group gathers in a circle for a final chant, then arm in arm each follows Noah down the hill. Often, Noah trots a short distance. The running tests participants' concentration and agility because the path is steep. Undaunted, they continue, an ecstatic troop enjoying the fruits of accomplishment and collective excitement of this ongoing adventure. Their songs echo off the hillsides: "Edelweiss," "America the Beautiful," "Exodus," and "Pass It On" reveal the joy of the entire group. "America! America! God shed His grace on thee . . ."; "This land is ours, God gave this land to us . . . we'll fight to make this land our own . . ."; "Bless our homeland forever . . ."; "It only takes a spark to get the fire going!"

The aura of camaraderie extends into the night. Around the campfire, participants huddle together and take turns sharing their reflections of the afternoon hike. Diane said:

The climb seemed almost impossible, but when you just take one step at a time it becomes much easier. It was hard for me when I was climbing for myself, but when I was climbing for Sally [a straggler] and helping her, it became so easy!

I also enjoyed the walk [said Shirley]. The greatest moment for me was the prayer. My prayer was mostly for the struggles of all the generations that have come before us. They set the foundation for the Restoration. There is going to be so much joy when we do restore the world, but that joy will be through our tears for all those who have suffered before us.

Lance, a prospect in his second week, added:

The walk up the hill seemed like it would be really hard at first, but it was easy when I was walking for Heavenly Father. I said, "Heavenly Father, I'm going to make it." Then it became easy. It was like that walk was a symbolic battle. Besides all of us making it to the top, the attitude we had when we arrived was also important.

#### Accomplished Commitment

Just after the last inspiration, someone called out, "Look, on the lawn!" Everyone turned to see a number of deer quietly grazing a few yards away. "They come here often!" exclaimed Noah. "Do you know why? It is because we are heavenly children." This is one of the many sublime moments at the Ideal City training session. After the deer saunter into the night, the heavenly children stand in a circle with their arms draped around one another and gaze up at the Milky Way. After a few message-laden songs, people begin to weep and laugh simultaneously, while they hug their buddies and others in the group.

During these specially choreographed scenes, the prospect feels acutely a personal connection with other prospects and Family members. Situations like the walk up the hill challenge their physical endurance and push them to emotional limits. Subsequently, many of the participants easily conclude that together the Family can build the Ideal World. "There is a feeling welling up inside me that I have never felt before! I know we can do it!" said one prospect.

Perhaps Lance's final statement could serve as a

metaphorical summary. He said that the walk up the hill was a symbolic battle not only to overcome the mountain but also to arrive with a proper attitude. Lance won the battle, but church members won the war. Their battle is to stimulate him and other prospects to "walk up the hill" of commitment to the movement. The task is accomplished by cultivating the proper attitude among prospects. When prospects develop a positive, energetic attitude towards their potential role as members of the Family, it is a consequence of members' creative efforts.

The attitude of self-sacrifice to help others meet the challenge of the hike as well as walking for Heavenly Father places the prospect in a unique position. He can conceive membership in the Family as an opportunity to contribute to the mutual fulfillment of his brothers and sisters as well as assume a role as a pioneer in the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

After new members return to the Bay Area to sell flowers and proselytize publicly for one or two months, they return to Booneville as full-fledged Family members. They will join other members in the weekly cycle of recruitment of newcomers at Ideal City. Their relationship to new prospects will reflect the methods and appeals they were subject to as prospects. They will lead their respective buddies by the hand through a weekend of exhilarating activity. Together, they will sing, chant, and cheer. New members will

continually encourage newcomers to remain totally involved by playfully poking them or smiling reassuringly at prospects when their attention or enthusiasm lags. New members will set a high standard for their guests by listening intently and responding fervently to the endless array of rhetoric and imagery conveyed through lectures, testimonies, and group discussions. They carefully will adapt appeals to the prospect's personal needs and idiosyncracies to be certain the prospect has experiences similar to those that facilitated their conversion. Finally, they will convey at every opportunity how joyful and rewarding his life has become since joining the Family.



## CHAPTER V

### AN OVERVIEW

The central concern of this thesis has been to describe the organized recruitment methods of the Unification Church. As an ethnographic study, the research data were gathered by qualitative field methods. The thesis does not theorize as to why individuals convert or predict the specific characteristics of those who may become members. Rather, it focuses on how church members accomplish recruitment through interaction between themselves and their prospects.

Obviously, not everyone entering the church's recruitment milieu joins the movement, but the thesis is presented from the standpoint that recruitment into the Family is a successful achievement. Indeed, it necessarily must be since the dropout rate within the Unification Church is about equal to its rate of recruitment. Without the ability to recruit effectively, the church's ranks would diminish rapidly.

The Creative Community Project is the particular segment of the church on which this study is based. It currently is the most successful recruitment center in the

United States. Members of the Creative Community Project are very successful because they manage to involve prospects totally in a highly controlled and emotional atmosphere. Their participation entails a contrived socialization process that includes affectionate personal ties, extreme pressure to conform to group life, isolation from the external realities, little opportunity for reflective thinking, and a sophisticated ideological indoctrination that confronts them with an opportunity to fulfill historical and personal destiny.

Members literally choreograph situations that continually subject their prospects to various forms of persuasion while avoiding physical coercion. This organizational momentum provides prospects with feelings of exhilaration and intense comradeship that augment their prior susceptibilities.

In summary, I want to propose the essential features of recruitment into the Unification Church. These features do not necessarily occur in the sequence presented. They are simultaneously related as interdependent elements equally necessary for the accomplishment of recruitment. Church members must (1) present a sincere dramatic performance, (2) establish the trust of potential members, (3) legitimize social control, (4) provide an exhilarating atmosphere, and (5) allow participants to act out role of membership.

### Sincere Performance

Members incorporate their recruitment methods into a performance in which they and their prospects participate in pre-designated roles. The term performance denotes a group engaged in dramaturgical cooperation to convey specific impressions and defines a contextual situation.<sup>1</sup> The Family's performance is incessant. Day after day, week after week, members invite, involve, and socialize individuals into a creatively produced milieu. The performance and production of this recruitment process, previously described, could be construed as very contrived and deceitful. Regardless, members of the Creative Community are certain their actions are "righteous." Their means justify their ends amidst a society that misunderstands them and often is hostile. Although essential information is withheld from recruits (e.g., Reverend Moon's role in the movement) and recruitment is astonishingly aggressive, members feel "heavenly deception" is necessary to achieve their goals.

As self-conceived world savers, it is imperative that they attempt to convert as many individuals as possible. To actively engage in the various dimensions of recruitment requires sustained expression of faith, determination, and enthusiasm--a sincere belief in their own performance. But for their performance to be successful, potential members by and

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<sup>1</sup>Irving Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1959), pp. 51, 85.

large also must be able to believe members are sincere. Irving Goffman notes this in the structural place of sincerity in the drama of events produced by any group.<sup>2</sup>

### Trust

Successful recruitment is contingent on securing trust among potential members. Without trust in the Family, prospects would not likely respond to the various appeals extended to them. Trust is essential to move the prospect from a wait-and-see attitude to total involvement.

Trust is instilled through a consistent style of interaction between Family members and prospects. Members rely heavily on their interpersonal charisma--the constant attention and affection they extend. It begins the moment an individual is encountered and continues through his entire indoctrination at Booneville and beyond. When witnessing a stranger in public (where most recruits are located), the member must assure the individual that his involvement with the Family will accentuate rather than threaten his well-being. As representatives of the Creative Community, members rely on their prior training and personal charm to convince the potential recruit to take the first in a series of steps towards assimilation into the life-world of the movement.

During the course of the training session, members extend endless kindness and courtesies they refer to as the

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

"love bomb." All prospects are assigned member-buddies. Their primary task is to cultivate a close friendship with prospects as well as inspire them to become totally absorbed in the continual array of stimulating events. From the Family's perspective, these trusting relationships develop very rapidly because they love unconditionally. But the "love bomb," sincere or not, remains sterile and uniform. Affective ties are inevitable in an environment that requires prospects always to reciprocate affection. This is consistent with Neil Solonen's instructions to be "gentle" in order to "win them" (p. 69), or, as a former participant said earlier, "In a matter of days, virtual strangers, by pleading, persistence, and proclamations of love, had succeeded in eliciting her love and trust in return" (p. 74).

Trust, once won, is not taken for granted but tenaciously preserved as the essential key to motivate prospects to remain total participants. Potential members' trust for the Family and their intense involvement are complementary features of recruitment. Prospects receive support for enthusiastically cheering, singing, chanting, and other gestures of enthusiasm. Continual support effectively sustains trust. Members applaud, hug, and cheer potential members' inspirations and testimonies as long as they reaffirm the Family's beliefs, goals, and values. Also, members strive to neutralize the doubts and uncertainties of "negative" prospects. For instance, Noah would not be in the

Family today had members not made an effort to reverse his skeptical attitude. The longer an individual remains at the training session, the more likely he is to develop an attachment to members of the Family.

### Legitimized Control

The next organizational requirement of recruitment is social control, achieved primarily by sustaining participants' total involvement. Procedures and norms are designed to facilitate total involvement. Routine rules and procedures are maintained by members' consensual unity, thus serving the system of social control. The strengths of such a system come from ". . . a successful merging of near total control at the organizational level and voluntary enthusiastic commitment at the individual level."<sup>3</sup> At Booneville, both are equally necessary. Without the Family's ability to legitimately monitor, scrutinize, and direct every aspect of the participant's experience, the total involvement needed for the recruitment process would not be possible. Without the participant's commitment to authority, social control would be progressively weakened. To effectively inspire voluntary involvement and define the character of that involvement is legitimization of control within the Family's environment.

Extensive personal manipulation of prospective members

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<sup>3</sup>B. D. Zablocki, The Joyful Community (Baltimore: Penguin, 1971), p. ?

inevitably follows control. Members seek to provoke certain patterns of behavior and emotion in such a way that these will appear to have arisen spontaneously from within the environment but actually are planned and directed.

The evangelical drama of the Unification Church training sessions appears to have a spontaneous quality. Songs, lectures, and testimonies, along with supportive chants, applause, and cheers, are arranged to provoke intense emotional states in the participants. Since prearranged scenes like intense group prayer, constant singing, and other displays of exuberance engross the prospect, we can infer that he is likely to evaluate his experience on an emotional basis and not realize he is subject to a system of controls. The style of lecture presentations is the most consistent example of planned spontaneity and manipulation. The lecturer seeks to impress upon participants the gravity of the church members' mission as world savers. Church members support the lecturer's exhortations with applause, cheers, and other affirmative gestures at proper moments.

Group leaders also carefully choreograph the interaction between members and potential members. They strive to develop an intense involvement among participants, consistent with Neil Solonen's instructions, where people experience such a closeness and ". . . communication and commitment are so deep that people must reveal themselves" (p. 72).

When prospective members are trustful, receptive, and willing participants on all levels, they do not outwardly protest announced rules and taken-for-granted norms that restrict their communication and movement. Hence, members can keep prospects separated from one another while concurrently totally involved together. Not only are they isolated from the external world but from one another, except for activities that are meticulously structured by members. Also, total involvement diminishes the possibility of alternative interpretations of events and situations. Prospects have little opportunity to reflect on and evaluate their experiences or share their perceptions with one another.

### Enthrallment

Events and activities within the Creative Community have an exciting quality. Participants experience emotional heights without suffering subsequent letdowns. The exceptional nature of collective joy lies in church members' ability to create events that have natural endings, yet the stimulation produced seemingly is inexhaustible. There always is the promise of more--the next event, the next day, the coming week.

All aspects of the training session blend together with exhilarating momentum. The Family's enthusiasm requires prospects to invest their entire beings into the participatory events. Jumping up to sing tumultuous songs;



running from place to place hand in hand with a buddy; and cheering, chanting, and clapping in unison with dozens of others inevitably makes a deep impression on prospective members.

Even the most reticent participant finds it difficult to resist being swept into this performance of continual consensus. One may remain intellectually unsympathetic to the Family's beliefs and goals, but he will be in some way moved by the intense revelry. Possibly no participant escapes feeling excitement, even if he regards the performance as inauthentic.

It is difficult to find words suitable for the phenomenon described. Enthralment is chosen because an ex-member once reflected on her years with the Family as enthralling. She told me that ". . . Now life is not nearly as intense as it used to be. When you're a member, you're filled with elation because you feel you're filled with such great purpose, that you're going to save the world."

What members call joy or enthrallment also is described in terms of their participation in a glorious historical moment. They strive to instill in prospects the significance of their historical destiny. Countless lectures, testimonies, and songs are structured to convince the prospect that the Family is the bearer of truth. God has chosen them to pioneer His Ideal World. The prospect can only actualize his full potential by accepting responsibility

to help the Family restore the Heavenly Kingdom on Earth.

Dramatic episodes like the walk up the mountain or when a prospect shares his testimony before the Family often are moments of truth. These scenes leave a lasting impression. The prospect may find it difficult to imagine his life having more meaning apart from the Family. Members hope and expect potential members to have such responses during these moments.

#### Assuming the Role

In a recent paper, Roger Strauss suggests that individuals often act intentionally to accomplish their own conversion. Recruits can creatively exploit religious collectives to learn the appropriate language, interpretive schemes, and world views to achieve a personal transformation.<sup>4</sup> This "activist" paradigm is not incompatible with recruitment into the Unification Church. In any given recruitment environment, including the Creative Community, individuals must rely on the religious group to provide rules and structure for proper behavior, regardless of whether they do creatively exploit the collective or merely comply with its demands. I suggest that recruitment is a mutual process. Potential members first rely on the Unification Church to provide the guidelines, then they take an active role in their own recruitment by acting according to

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<sup>4</sup>Roger A. Strauss, "Religious Conversion as a Personal Accomplishment: The Activist Perspective" (paper prepared for the Annual Meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association, Spokane, Washington, 1978), pp. 5-6.

the Family's expectations of them as participants in transition to membership. Anson Shupe and David Bromley found in their study of the Unification Church that during initial involvement ". . . behavioral changes can be more productively viewed as role related, the results of the social structuring of behavior and not of motivational predispositions or psychological commitment."<sup>5</sup>

At the training session, members structure behavior by promoting "one hundred percent" participation; they also direct the quality of that participation by selectively developing situations wherein the prospect can experience and express himself in ways that emulate the life of Family membership. His behavior becomes increasingly role related. Throughout the training session, he is encouraged to establish goals consistent with the Family's ideals: realize God's will, accept responsibility, and self-actualize. Of course, none of these goals is recognized as achievable outside the life-world of the Family.

To help him achieve these high standards, the prospect is presented role models on which to pattern his behavior. Leaders of the Family stress that they once were in the same situation as the prospect--they, too, were uncertain, confused, perhaps skeptical but with time realize<sup>d</sup> they could trust the Family and become committed.

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<sup>5</sup> Anson D. Shupe, Jr. and David G. Bromley, "Just a Few Years Seem Like a Lifetime: A Role Theory Approach to Participation in Religious Movements," in Research in Social Movements, Conflict, and Change, ed. Louis Kriesburg (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press. Forthcoming.

Concurrently, the prospect may find the Principles are increasingly meaningful to his life. But from a subjective view, immediate or total allegiance to the Family's world view is not essential for initial commitment to take place. Rather, when the prospect is allowed to act out the role of membership over a period of days and weeks, he increasingly can conceive himself as an important part of the Family. For most recruits, commitment is gradual; if they choose to return to the external world as Family members, the church provides them with experiences designed to sustain commitment.

An examination of recruitment into the Unification Church reveals a unique historical development. Perhaps past and present religious movements, as well as traditional churches, have employed recruitment practices that are as sophisticated and intensive as the Unification Church, but the uniqueness of Reverend Moon's movement is found in its elaborate, meticulously organized strategies of recruitment invoked on a day-by-day basis.

Traditionally, religious involvement and socialization has come about for people through some sort of personal familiarity between the individual and the religious group. People usually make contact with a church, sect, or cult through friends, family ties, or acquaintances. That is, initial stages of indoctrination are within the context of prior social relationships.

After initial contact is made, the conversion process of traditional recruitment takes place within the general proximity of where the individual approached the religious body or it approached him. For instance, community-based churches invite newcomers to next Sunday's services and make house calls to a person's home if he shows sufficient interest and willingness. Typically, during religious indoctrination the individual remains within the boundaries of his everyday life world. Hence, he has optional viewpoints and access to individuals outside the religious group in which he becomes involved. One is not likely to be subject to the acute pressures that are characteristic of recruitment into the Unification Church, which in relation to traditional recruitment follows a contrasting course.

Its uniqueness begins with an organized effort to place daily a significant number of members in public locations to proselytize complete strangers in a methodical and enthusiastic fashion. The potential member rarely instigates contact with the movement. The Unification Church moves towards him. Once the individual is witnessed to by a church member, the movement's next objective is to escort him out of families' <sup>or</sup> surroundings and begin his indoctrination at their own isolated retreats.

Here is where church recruitment is most unusual and creative. After the individual's interest is secured, he

is subject to an elaborate program designed explicitly to generate rapid commitment to the movement. Within environments like Booneville, the church facilitates mass participation that effects and influences each potential recruit differently. But all recruits share the common experience of a variety of choreographed appeals, symbols, and rhetoric. Recruits are separated from their community and one another for sustained periods of time. Consequently, there is an absence of alternative interpretations about the meaning and consequences of their involvement in the recruitment milieu. We find this style of recruitment is a new historical development in the way the church siezes the initiative. It isolates and controls communication among young people apart from society, then makes full use of its persuasive powers to secure their allegiance. The recruit makes a sudden transition from being society's child to a spiritual child of Reverend Moon, the True Parent, before family and friends have the opportunity to be cognizant of the process he undertakes and counter with their own arguments, perspectives, and alternatives.

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